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News Tracker ... What's new with old news

States

Staten Island ferry crash: The National Transportation Safety Board delayed its release of information about the Staten Island ferry crash on Monday, saying criminal prosecutors need more time to review the information.

The NTSB's last-minute announcement hinted at some degree of miscommunication between the federal agencies investigating the accident.

The NTSB investigates major accidents in order to make recommendations to make transportation systems safer.

Hurricane Jeanne: St. Paul Travelers Cos. said on Monday that it expects \$93 million in losses from Hurricane Jeanne after taxes and reinsurance, bringing its total losses from the four Florida hurricanes to \$402 million.

The loss from Jeanne includes \$26 million for commercial property, \$44 million for specialty lines, and \$23 million for personal lines.

Earlier this month the company said it lost an estimated \$94 million from Hurricane Ivan, \$140 million from Hurricane Charley, and \$75 million because of Frances.

World

Journalism awards: The Spanish newspaper El Mundo is giving journalism awards to U.S. investigative reporter Seymour Hersh and Mariane Pearl, widow of slain Wall Street Journal reporter Daniel Pearl.

Hersh, 67, won an award created in memory of Julio Fuentes and Julio Anguita Parrado, two El Mundo war correspondents who were killed in Afghanistan and Iraq, respectively.

The awards were announced by a jury in September, and Hersh and Pearl were to receive them in person at a ceremony Monday.

N. Korea talks: North Korea's No. 2 leader met his counterpart Monday in Beijing in a visit that Chinese leaders are expected to use to press Pyongyang to resume stalled six-nation talks on the dispute over its nuclear program.

Kim Yong Nam of North Korea was told by Wu Bangguo of China that "keeping the momentum of the nuclear talks and promoting the solution of the problem is the common wish of the international community."

State television showed the two sitting in



California wildfires: California Department of Forestry and Fire Protections employee Wurb Stampfli surveys the destroyed CDF Berryessa Lookout Tower near Guinda, Calif., on Thursday. Hand crews and air tankers continued working to encircle a wildfire near Lake Berryessa in the remote terrain northeast of San Francisco as a rainstorm helped firefighters gain control. Full containment of the blaze was not expected for another two days.

a meeting room at the Great Hall of the People, the seat of China's legislature. Each was flanked by officials from their country.

Indonesia bombings: Jailed cleric Abu Bakar Bashir will go on trial next week accused of involvement in the deadly bomb attacks on the island of Bali and at the JW Marriott hotel in the capital, defense attorneys said Monday.

On Friday, prosecutors charged the 67-year-old Bashir under the country's anti-terrorism law for allegedly ordering the Aug. 5, 2003, Marriott bomb that killed 12 people. They also charged him under the criminal code for plotting the Oct. 12, 2002, Bali bombings that left 202 people dead, mostly foreign tourists.

Court officials said the trial will begin Oct. 28, Bashir's lawyer, Wirawan Adnan, said Monday, adding that it will take place in a government auditorium in south Jakarta because so many people are expected to attend.

Afghanistan vote: An explosion hit a car carrying an election worker in southeastern Afghanistan on Monday, killing him and four other Afghan civilians, just over a week after the war-ravaged nation held its first presidential vote, officials said.

The vote count entered its fourth day with the chief rival of interim leader Hamid

Karzai claiming that fraud had helped the U.S.-backed incumbent amass a 45 percent edge point lead in preliminary results from the Oct. 9 election.

Bobby Fischer case: An American civil rights lawyer hired to breathe new life into chess legend Bobby Fischer's efforts to fight deportation to the United States accused U.S. officials on Monday of "grotesque" abuse of their powers and threatened to take the case to the Supreme Court.

Richard Vattuone accused Washington of persecuting Fischer for his political views, refusing to observe due process in the revocation of his U.S. passport and ignoring objections over the legality of its moves to have him deported.

U.S. Embassy officials denied Fischer was being treated unfairly.

Haiti violence: Haiti's interim prime minister accused ousted President Jean-Bertrand Aristide of backing a wave of violence from exile in North Africa, while a Chinese police unit arrived to join a U.N. peacekeeping force that has increasingly faced gunfire in the streets.

Many of the 95 Chinese riot police smiled and waved Sunday after stopping off a jet for their country's first contribution to a U.N. mission in the Western Hemisphere.

Stories and photos from The Associated Press

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U.S. deaths in Iraq

The Associated Press

As of Friday, 1,086 members of the U.S. military had died since the beginning of the Iraq war in March 2003, according to the Defense Department. Of those, 830 died as a result of hostile action and 256 died of nonhostile causes. The figures include three military civilians. The department did not provide an update over the weekend.

The British military has reported 67 deaths, Italy, 19; Poland, 13; Spain, 11; Ukraine, nine; Bulgaria, six; Slovakia, three; Thailand, two; the Netherlands, two; and Denmark, El Salvador, Estonia, Hungary and Latvia have reported one death each.

Since May 1, 2003, when President Bush declared that major combat operations in Iraq had ended, 948 U.S. military members have died, 721 as a result of hostile action and 227 of nonhostile causes, according to the military's numbers as of Friday.

The latest identifications reported by the military:

■ **Army Spc.** Joshua H. Waters, 21, Irving, Texas, died Thursday in Baghdad, when his patrol came under fire; assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 7th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division, Fort Hood.

■ **Army Pvt.** 2 David L. Waters, 19, Auburn, Calif.; died Thursday in Baghdad, when a bomb exploded near his vehicle; assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 14th Infantry Regiment, 10th Mountain Division (Light Infantry), Fort Drum.

■ **Army Lt. Col.** Mark P. Phelan, 44, Green Lane, Pa.; died Wednesday in Mosul, Iraq, when a bomb hit his vehicle; assigned to the Reserve's 416th Civil Affairs Battalion; Morristown, Pa.

■ **Army Maj.** Charles R. Soltz, 36, Irvine, Calif.; died Wednesday in Mosul, Iraq, when a bomb exploded near his vehicle; assigned to the Reserve's 426th Civil Affairs Battalion; Upland, Calif.

■ **Army Spc.** Jaime Moreno, 28, Round Lake Beach, Ill.; died Wednesday in Baghdad, of injuries sustained when a bomb exploded near his patrol vehicle; assigned to the 20th Engineer Battalion, 1st Cavalry Division; Fort Hood.

■ **Army Capt.** Dennis L. Pinto, 30, Lima, Ohio; died Tuesday in Baghdad, after a bomb exploded near his patrol vehicle; assigned to the 20th Engineer Battalion, 1st Cavalry Division; Fort Hood.

■ **Army Spc.** Michael S. Wether, 30, Rochester, N.Y.; died Tuesday in Baghdad, after a bomb exploded near his patrol vehicle; assigned to the 20th Engineer Battalion, 1st Cavalry Division; Fort Hood.

Car bombs kill 12 in Baghdad, Mosul

Iraq releases Fallujah's top negotiator in apparent bid to revive talks

By ROBERT H. REID

The Associated Press

BAGHDAD — Car bombers struck Baghdad and Mosul, raising the two-day death toll from the weapons to 12 by Monday.

The chief negotiator for the city of Fallujah dashed hopes for a quick resumption of peace talks despite his release by U.S. and Iraqi authorities.

In Mosul, a bomb detonated Sunday morning on a bridge, killing five Iraqis and wounding 15 others, the U.S. military said Monday. The blast occurred when the suicide car bomber collided with another car, setting off a giant blaze that damaged several other vehicles. A car bomber Monday hit a civilian convoy, killing one and wounding four others.

In Baghdad, a car bomb exploded late Sunday near a police patrol in the Jadriyah district, killing six people, including three police officers, and wounding 26 others. The blast hit a cafe near the Australian Embassy, although there were no Australian casualties.

The American death toll in the blast reached a grim milestone this weekend: 1,100. The crash of two Army helicopters Saturday raised the toll to 1,097 servicemembers and three civilians — two working for the Army and one working for the Air Force.

Meanwhile, Fallujah negotiator Sheik Khaled al-Jumelli said peace talks to end the standoff in Iraq's major insurgent bastion will remain suspended as a protest against his detention by U.S. troops, who accused him of representing a terrorist group. "The fact is that I'm negotiating on behalf of Fallujah people — civilians, kids, women — who have no power but through being represented by somebody. Since the situation has got up to this, each can go wherever they want and we don't need to talk about negotiations," he told Al-Arabiya TV.

Al-Jumelli told the news he was released Monday from U.S. and Iraqi custody after being de-



Chief negotiator for Fallujah, Sheik Khaled al-Jumelli, right, is welcomed by a friend after being released from U.S. custody in Fallujah, Iraq, on Monday, on the orders of Iraqi interim Prime Minister Ayad Allawi.

tained Friday after talks broke down over the city's rejection of a demand by Prime Minister Ayad Allawi to turn over terrorist leader Abu Musab al-Zarqawi. Al-Zarqawi's group Tawhid and Jihad has claimed responsibility in numerous beheadings and suicide bombings, including two attacks on Baghdad's Green Zone last week that killed six, including four U.S. civilians.

Witnesses said al-Jumelli was picked up after leaving a mosque following prayers in a village about 10 miles south of Fallujah. Al-Jumelli said he was taken to a Marine base outside Fallujah and then by helicopter to another location. During his detention, al-Jumelli said he was treated well by the Americans and was not handcuffed or blindfolded like his companions. The other three men have not been released, he said.

The Interior Ministry said al-Jumelli was being released on orders of Allawi.

Also Monday, Iraqi officials

said a cash-for-weapons program for Shiite fighters in Baghdad's Sadr City and other locations was extended until Tuesday.

Iraqi officials hope that Fallujah leaders can be persuaded to negotiate a weapons buyback deal similar to one struck with Shiite radical cleric Muqtada al-Sadr to end clashes in Sadr City.

U.S. forces have been waging days of air and ground assaults in Fallujah, targeting key sites purportedly used by al-Zarqawi associates.

The latest U.S. assault began Thursday after Fallujah clerics rejected the "impossible" demand to turn over the terrorist leader, insisting that al-Zarqawi was not in the city. Fallujah fell under control of radical clerics and their armed mujahideen fighters after U.S. Marines lifted their three-week siege of the city in April.

Sunday's car bomb in Baghdad's Jadriyah district hit a cafe near al-Husseini Square late Sunday night, said spokesman Col.

Adnan Abdul-Rahman. It was loaded with more than 1,000 pounds of explosives, he said.

Police and security officials have been targeted by insurgents intent on destabilizing the reconstruction of Iraq.

Abdul-Rahman said the bomb killed six people, including three policemen. Eleven of the 26 wounded were policemen.

In other violence: ■ A militant group has killed two Macedonian men it accused of spying for the United States, Al-Jazeera television reported.

It broadcast a videotape from the Islamic Army in Iraq saying the Macedonians were captured "a few days ago outside an American base in Iraq."

■ An Australian journalist held hostage in Baghdad for 24 hours over the weekend was released unharmed and arrived in Amman, Jordan, his employers said.

■ Baqouba police patrol was blown apart Sunday night, injuring nine people, including seven policemen.

Brit details U.S. request for troop redeployment

By ED JOHNSON

The Associated Press

LONDON — Britain is considering a request by the United States to redeploy a small number of British troops in Iraq so as to free up U.S. troops to assess the request, operations, Defense Secretary Geoff Hoon told lawmakers Monday.

Hoon said British commanders would send out a reconnaissance team on Tuesday to assess the request, and said the chief of defense staff was expected to make a recommendation "by the middle of the week."

In a statement to the House of Commons, he rejected claims by opposition lawmakers that any redeployment would be a political gesture designed to bolster Presi-

dent Bush ahead of presidential elections on Nov. 2.

"I want to make clear that the request is a military request," Hoon told lawmakers. He stressed that America, contrary to media reports, had not asked for British soldiers to be sent to Baghdad or Fallujah.

"The U.S. request is for a limited number of U.K. ground forces to be made available to relieve U.S. forces to allow them in turn to participate in further operations elsewhere in Iraq to maintain the continuing pressure on terrorists," Hoon added.

"We are obviously considering this request," he said, adding that issues such as the timing of any redeployment, the length of the potential operation, command and control arrangements and

which regiment to send had yet to be worked out.

U.S. military command in Iraq made the request for assistance Oct. 10, he added, and said it involved "U.K. land forces" operating outside of the British-controlled sector in southern Iraq.

Several newspapers have reported that Britain is considering sending its reserve force — the 650 strong First Battalion Black Watch — to fill in for U.S. troops expected to launch a major offensive against insurgents in Fallujah.

Britain currently has some 9,000 troops in Iraq, operating in the relatively peaceful south around the port city of Basra.

Sending British soldiers further north into the U.S.-controlled sector, where there are more attacks by insurgents, car-

ries a risk of higher casualties and would be politically sensitive for Prime Minister Tony Blair.

Some lawmakers are opposed to British troops coming under U.S. command, believing that would put soldiers under a greater threat of attack. Many believe that three decades of Irish Republican Army violence in Northern Ireland have given British soldiers experience in urban patrolling and helped them detect about a well-honed instinct for ambushes and a sense of restraint. Hoon dismissed such concerns.

"If we agree to this request, the arrangements will ensure that U.K. forces have a specific task. They will be responsible for a particular area. There are no practical difficulties for U.K. forces operating alongside those from the U.S.," he said.

No decision on reservists who refused Iraq mission

BY TYNI TRAN

The Associated Press

BAGHDAD — The U.S. military said Monday no decision had been made on whether to discipline Army reservists who refused a supply mission last week, despite statements from their relatives that the soldiers would be discharged.

"It is too early in the process to tell if any disciplinary actions will be initiated," Maj. Richard Spiegle, spokesman for the 13th Corps Support Command in Balad, said in an e-mail to The Associated Press.

Families of some soldiers involved said Monday the commanders did not act on complaints that the convoy was hauling contaminated fuel or that their vehicles were in poor working order and were not sufficiently protected with armor.

Spiegle said no decision will be made on discipline until the investigation is completed and recommendations are made.

"I could not speculate as to why soldiers would be telling people that they are going to be discharged," he said.

The Army announced last week it was investigating up to 19 members of a platoon from the 343rd Quartermaster Company, based in Rock Hill, S.C., after they refused to transport supplies from Tallil air base near Nasiriyah to Taji north of Baghdad.



A U.S. military Humvee burns last month after an attack in Baghdad. The U.S. military said Monday that no decision had been made on whether to discipline members of a platoon from the 343rd Quartermaster Company after they refused to transport supplies from Tallil air base to Taji north of Baghdad. The unit's members said the fuel trucks they were to drive lacked the armor needed for the dangerous mission.

On Monday, Ricky Shealey of Quinton, Ala., father of one of the soldiers involved, told CBS' "The Early Show" that his son, Spc. Scott Shealey, "is being told he is going to be processed out of the Army with a general" discharge.

Shealey said his son "is very depressed about this."

A general discharge is considered a disciplinary action that would lead soldiers to risk losing most — if not all — of their veterans'

benefits.

However, the commanding general of the 13th Corps Support Command, Brig. Gen. James Chambers, said Sunday in Baghdad that two investigations were under way and that 18 soldiers were involved. He also said none was under arrest, and it was too early to tell whether the soldiers would be disciplined.

Shealey said his son refused to go on the mission because the

Army investigating soldiers in Iraq

The U.S. Army Reserve soldiers who refused orders to drive a dangerous route were members of one of a few supply units whose trucks are still unarmored, their commanding general said Sunday. The route is called "Main Supply Route Tampa" by the military.



SOURCE: Global Security

fuel they were to haul was tainted, and he feared it would be put in a helicopter that would later crash.

"The command just totally ignored them when they told them the fuel was contaminated, and they were still going to send them out on this mission with contaminated fuel," Shealey told CBS. "The command was completely aware of the situation, and I think it's a command issue and not a soldier issue."

Teresa Hill of Dothan, Ala., the mother of Spc. Amber McCleenny, told NBC's "Today" show: "It was about the fuel. It was the broken-down trucks. Unarmored vehicles."

Chambers denied the fuel was contaminated.

He said the Army is adding steel armor plating on unarmored vehicles and upgrading maintenance. Some of the soldiers told NBC members they refused the assignment because they lacked proper equipment and protection.

Chambers said the command will "assess armor" on supply vehicles, which are often subject to

insurgent attack, and add steel plating if necessary.

The mission was later carried out by other soldiers from the 343rd, which has at least 120 soldiers, the military said.

Chambers has since ordered the 343rd to undergo a "safety-maintenance stand down," during which it will conduct no further missions as its vehicles are inspected, the military said.

The platoon has troops from Alabama, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina and South Carolina.

The issue of lack of appropriate equipment has been a long-standing complaint by low-level soldiers and higher U.S. command.

Army Lt. Gen. Ricardo Sanchez, commander of U.S. forces in Iraq from mid-2003 until this summer, sent a letter to the Pentagon in December 2003 complaining that supplies were short, and this was adversely affecting the ability of troops to fight. The Washington Post reported Monday.

Expert: Army not likely to punish GIs for rejecting assignment

BY SANDRA JONTZ

Stars and Stripes

ARLINGTON, Va. — The soldiers of the 343rd Quartermaster Company who refused to drive a reportedly unsafe trucks over a dangerous route in Iraq aren't

likely to face severe punishment, one military legal expert said Monday.

Too many troops voiced the same concern, which led to a halt in missions while the unit's vehicles were inspected, and there is the risk that the incident could be-

come a political football, said Eugene Fidell.

Fidell teaches military justice at Harvard Law School and serves as president of the National Institute of Military Justice.

With the political heat generated over the U.S. military involvement in Iraq, from prisoner abuse scandals to a lack of evidence on weapons of mass destruction, to reports troops were deployed ill-equipped, it's unlikely the involved soldiers will face harsh punishment or be made examples of, he said.

"Personally, I am quite skeptical if any serious disciplinary action ensues," Fidell said. "I think probably some people are going to get chewed out, and I also wouldn't be surprised if the command takes a hit over serious appearance of lack of mission readiness."

That said, the alleged failure of the reservists to obey a lawful order is "obviously impermissible," Fidell said. It puts lives at risk, cracks the foundations of military discipline, and can harm morale.

"It may have been an unwise order, but you can't have people refusing orders. It's hallowed in military life, particularly in combat elements, and that's not something [leadership] will tolerate."

Up to 19 soldiers allegedly refused orders to drive fuel trucks because they had not been serviced and the convoy did not have any armor. The route is called the missions from Tallil air base in southern Iraq to Taji, about 15 miles north of Baghdad.

"Not all of their trucks are completely armored. In their case, they haven't had the chance to be armored," Brig. Gen. James E. Chambers, commanding general of 13th Corps Support Command, said during a weekend press conference in Baghdad, according to The Associated Press.

They since have returned to duty, and it was "too early" Sunday to determine if any will face disciplinary action, Chambers said.

Troops have measures in place to appropriately voice concerns, Fidell said.

"People in the field may have information that may not be available to those giving the order, and you can speak up, provided you do it in an appropriate fashion. In the meantime, you do as you're told," Fidell said. "And you always can go up the chain of command, again, provided you do it in an appropriate fashion."

There is flexibility built into the system, but "disobey a lawful

order and do so at your own peril."

Still, "right there and right now, I'd be quite surprised if we saw any court martial charges," Fidell said. "You can't rule anything out, but it's my intuition. To bring down the wrath of the U.S. on these people, right before a presidential election in which conditions of this war is an issue, might not be the right politics."

"Whether that kind of politics plays a role and gets communicated to those over there, we'll probably never know. This is probably an issue those in position of responsibility would prefer not to deal with, and would want to make it a bigger issue."

"Though still a serious infraction, the fact that so many refused the order lends credibility to their assertions, and points to another indicator that the soldiers likely will not face harsh punishment, Fidell said.

"It tends to suggest there was objective merit to their concern," he said. "To have one person on a personal idiosyncratic mission is different from having a lot of careered reservists who are really concerned about being assigned to something unnecessarily unsafe."

There is flexibility built into the system, but "disobey a lawful

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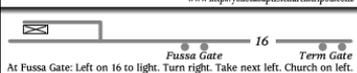
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Sanchez had reported shortages in Iraq

BY THOMAS E. RICKS

The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — The top U.S. commander in Iraq complained to the Pentagon last winter that his supply situation was so poor that it threatened Army troops' ability to fight, according to an official document that has surfaced only now.

The lack of key spare parts for gear vital to combat operations, such as tanks and helicopters, was causing problems so severe, Army Lt. Gen. Ricardo S. Sanchez wrote in a letter to top Army officials, that "I cannot continue to support sustained combat operations with rates this low."



Sanchez

Senior Army officials said most of Sanchez's concerns have been addressed in recent months, but they continue to keep a close eye on the problems he identified. The situation is "substantially better" now, said Gary Moteck, deputy director of operations for the Army Materiel Command.

Sanchez, who was the senior commander on the ground in Iraq from the summer of 2003 until the summer of 2004, said in his letter that Army units in Iraq were "struggling just to maintain ... relatively low readiness rates" on key combat systems, such as M-1 Abrams tanks, Bradley Fighting Vehicles, anti-mortar radars and Black Hawk helicopters.

He said units were waiting an average of 40 days for critical spare parts, which he noted was almost three times the Army's average. In some Army supply depots in Iraq, 40 percent of critical parts were at "zero balance," meaning they were absent from depot shelves, he said.

He also protested in his letter, sent Dec. 4 to the No. 2 officer in the Army, with copies to other senior officials, that his soldiers still needed protective inserts to upgrade 36,000 sets of body armor, but that their delivery twice had been postponed in the month before he was writing. There were 131,000 U.S. troops in Iraq at the time.

In what appears to be a plea to top officials to spur the bureaucracy to respond more quickly, Sanchez concluded, "I cannot sustain readiness without Army-level intervention."

Sanchez, who since has moved back to his permanent base in Germany, did not respond to telephone and e-mail messages seeking comment.

His letter of concern has surfaced after repeated statements by President Bush that he is determined to ensure that U.S. troops fighting in Iraq have all that they need to execute their missions.

"I have pledged, as has the secretary of defense, to give our troops everything that is necessary to complete their mission with the utmost safety," he said in May. Earlier this month, he said in Manchester, N.H., that "When America puts our troops in combat, I believe they deserve the best training, the best equipment, the full support of our government."

A copy of Sanchez's letter was given to The Washington Post by a person familiar with the situation who was dismayed that front-line troops had not been adequately supplied. That person also disagrees with the Bush administration's handling of Iraq, but said that was not part of the motivation in providing the document.

The disclosure of Sanchez's concerns also follows recent comments by former ambassador Paul Bremer, Sanchez's civilian counterpart in running the U.S. occupation of Iraq, that he believed more troops were needed in Iraq and had asked the Bush administration to send them.

Lt. Gen. Claude Christianison, the senior logistics officer on the Army staff at the Pentagon, said the readiness problems in Iraq peaked last fall but largely have been addressed. He said they were caused by a combination of problems in the supply pipeline and an unexpectedly high pace of combat operations as the Iraqi insurgency flared last year.

"All of a sudden, at the end of July (2003), the insurgency started to do that IED business all over Iraq," he noted, using the acronym for improvised explosive device, the military's term for roadside bombs. In response, the pace for U.S. troops jumped, causing them to use their tanks and other armored vehicles at much higher rates than had

been expected.

"The tanks are operating at 3,000 to 4,000 miles a year," Christianison said, which he noted is about five times the rate they are driven during training at their home bases. The readiness rate for M-1 Abrams tanks fell to 78 percent last October, he said, compared to an Army standard of 90 percent. Because of the intensity of recent operations, said Moteck of the Army's Materiel Command, the readiness rate for the tanks recently dropped from 95 percent to 83 percent.

Readiness rates also generally dipped last spring when insurgents destroyed seven bridges along the main supply route from Kuwait to Baghdad, Christianison said. In some cases, he said, supplies were cut off for "several days."

But he said the supply situation has improved since then, even as the pace of U.S. combat operations has remained intense. The waiting period for critical spare parts in Iraq is now about 24 days, about half of what it was when Sanchez wrote his letter, Christianison said.

The body armor problem — which had become a hot button issue with Congress after some families bought protective armor privately and shipped it to their relatives in the Army in Iraq — was solved sooner, Christianison noted, with all troops in Iraq equipped with updated gear by the end of January, about seven weeks after Sanchez wrote his letter.

Christianison said Sanchez sent only one such statement of concern from Iraq. "It's the only one we received from Rick that had anything to do with readiness," he said. He said he had not been shocked by the letter because Army logistics were aware of the problems, aware that Sanchez's assessment of them and were taking steps to remedy them.

The Army Materiel Command's Moteck said the readiness of ground combat systems such as tanks and Bradley Fighting Vehicles remains a concern but no longer must be handled on an "emergency" basis, with tanks and other heavy parts being shipped by air. "We are now at the point where we can routinely ship trucks" by sea, which is far less expensive, he said. That is mainly because the manufacturing capacity to produce trucks has expanded to meet the unexpected surge in demand caused by fighting in Iraq, he said.

14 held on active duty as potential witnesses for prison abuse cases

BY FOSTER KLUG

The Associated Press

BALTIMORE — The Army has extended active duty for 14 potential witnesses in the criminal trials of fellow reservists accused of abusing Iraqi prisoners, military officials said Monday.

While other members of the Maryland-based 372nd Military Police Company have returned to their civilian lives, the potential witnesses have been retained until their original two-year call-up orders expire on Feb. 22, said Army spokeswoman Maj. Elizabeth Robbins. Seven members of the company were charged after the release of photos showing soldiers from the unit humiliating detainees at the Abu Ghraib prison near Baghdad.

Pfc. Lynndee England, the reservist seen in some of the most notorious photos, faces a January court-martial.

The potential witnesses, who returned from Iraq in August, are stationed at Fort Lee, Va.

Robbins said the decision to keep them on active duty originated with Lt. Gen. Thomas Metz, commander of ground forces in Iraq, and was approved by acting Army Secretary Les Brownlee.

Asked if the decision was a common Army practice, Robbins replied: "It is not."

"We took extraordinary care in making the request," she said. "I took seriously that we are asking these individuals to stay on active duty to perform an extremely important duty. This is not a normal thing. We want to do the right thing here."

Robbins said there had been no decision on whether the soldiers would be retained past Feb. 22.

"We'll cross that bridge when we come to it," she said.

Eugene Fidell, a specialist in military law and president of the National Institute of Military Justice, said the government has other ways to compel the testimony of witnesses at trial, including obtaining an enforceable court order.

"I think this was done for convenience, to basically make sure the people were available," Fidell, who teaches military justice at Harvard Law School.

"But I can think of few better ways to alienate witnesses on whose testimony you might have to rely than to basically put their lives on hold."

One soldier from the 372nd, Sgt. Jeremy Sivits, is serving a one-year prison sentence after pleading guilty in May to three charges. Another member of the unit, Staff Sgt. Ivan "Chip" Frederick, plans to plead guilty Wednesday to four charges, said his attorney, Gary Myers.

"International terrorism has as its goal to prevent the election of President Bush to a second term," he said. "If they achieve that goal, then that will give international terrorism a new impetus and extra power."

Still, Putin didn't say which candidate he favored in the Nov. 2 U.S. presidential election.

"We unconditionally respect any choice of the American citizen," he said. "I don't want to spoil relations with either candidate."

From The Associated Press

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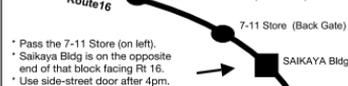


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Putin: Terrorists want Bush to lose

DUSHANBE, Tajikistan — Russian President Vladimir Putin said Monday that terrorists are aiming to derail President Bush's chances at re-election through their attacks in Iraq.

"I consider the activities of terrorists in Iraq are not as much aimed at coalition forces but more personally against President Bush," Putin said at a news conference.

IN THE WORLD

Iran to halt some nuclear activities

By ALI AKBAR DAREINI

The Associated Press

TEHRAN, Iran — Iran said Monday it is prepared to suspend temporarily some nuclear activities, but it would not forgo its right to enrich uranium.

The big three European powers reportedly intend to offer Iran this week a package of economic incentives in the hope of persuading the country to abandon uranium enrichment, a process used to produce fuel for nuclear reactors and weapons.

The move by Britain, France and Germany is designed to head off a confrontation between Iran and the U.N. nuclear agency, where the United States has been arguing that Iran has secret plans to build atomic weapons.

"From a tactical point of view, discussion on how long to continue suspension of some nuclear activities is negotiable," Iran's top nuclear negotiator, Hasan Rowhani, told state television Monday.

But if the discussion is about

depriving us of our legitimate right (to manage the cycle of nuclear fuel), it's not negotiable. Our negotiating team is not authorized to discuss this either with Europeans or others," Rowhani said.

He said any suspension of nuclear activities would have to be for "a short period of time."

Last month, the International Atomic Energy Agency unanimously passed a resolution that demands Iran freeze all work on uranium enrichment and related activities, such as uranium reprocessing and the building of centrifuges used for enrichment.

The U.N. nuclear watchdog is due to meet Nov. 25 to judge Iran's compliance. An unsatisfactory judgment could lead to Iran's file being referred to the U.N. Security Council, which has the power to impose sanctions on Iran.

Iran has already defied the IAEA resolution by continuing to build centrifuges and by converting a few tons of raw uranium into hexafluoride gas, a stage prior to enrichment.

Darfur intervention rejected

Regional leaders say humanitarian crisis is an 'African issue'

By KHALED AL-DREED

The Associated Press

TRIPOLI, Libya — Sudan's president and four African counterparts rejected Monday any foreign intervention in Darfur, describing the bloody humanitarian crisis as an "absolute African issue."

After an overnight summit, the leaders of Chad, Egypt, Libya, Nigeria and Sudan issued a statement that seemed to say they would not accept the imposition of sanctions or any other penalties on Sudan by the U.N. Security Council or Western powers.

Sudan faces the threat of U.N. sanctions as the U.N. Security Council investigates allegations leveled by the United States and humanitarian groups that the government and its allied Arab militia have committed genocide against Darfur's African people. An estimated 70,000 people have died since conflict broke out in Sudan's western region early last year. Nearly 1.5 million people have fled their homes, tens of thousands crossing into neighboring Chad. The government denies genocide has occurred.

In their statement, the five

presidents expressed approval of what they called Sudan's "efforts to improve the humanitarian situation ... its cooperation with international parties interested in human rights."

But they also said they hoped "the Sudanese government adopts measures to comply with the demands of (U.N.) Security Council's resolutions 1556 and 1564" — which demand that the government disarm all militia and restore law and order in Darfur.

The presidents said they "reject any foreign intervention from any party in this absolute African issue."

The U.N. Security Council has said it would consider penalties such as sanctions if the Sudanese government fails to comply with its resolutions and restore peace to Darfur.

The presidents called for the respect of "Sudan's sovereignty, independence, unity and its territorial integrity."

At the outset of the talks in a Tripoli hotel, the spokesman for Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak said the summit aimed to prove that African leaders can solve their own problems.

"What is important is to make

Sudan comply with its (international) commitments. Threats of sanctions will not solve the problem," said spokesman Magid Abdul Fatah.

Libyan Foreign Minister Abdel Rahman Shalgam said: "We are all concerned to find a solution which will not only solve the security and the political problem, but also the humanitarian problem."

Shalgam and his counterparts discussed Darfur at talks earlier in the day.

Before the presidents broke their daylong Ramadan fast together, it was reported that there was a proposal for Egypt, Libya, Nigeria and Chad to set up a committee to mediate between the Khartoum government and the rebels in Darfur.

The final statement did not mention such a committee, but it said foreign ministers would "form a mechanism to follow up what is being applied on the ground within the African Union framework and report to the leaders."

The African Union has a small number of monitors in Darfur protected by a few hundred African soldiers. There are plans to increase the number of monitors and troops.

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China: War shrine visits hurting ties with Japan

BY MARI YAMAGUCHI
The Associated Press

TOKYO — China's new ambassador to Japan said Monday that relations between the two Asian neighbors have been hampered due to Japanese leaders' repeated visits to a Tokyo war shrine that Japan's neighbors say glorifies the country's aggressive past.

Wang Yi said that friendship between China and Japan has not moved in a "favorable direction" compared to rapid expansion in trade and economy between the two countries.

"The biggest obstacle hampering healthy and smooth political relations is the Yasukuni [Shrine] issue, and we should try to remove it," Wang said at a news conference. "The Yasukuni issue is a test for Japan to show if it can properly atone for its past."

Nearly 2.5 million war dead, including executed war criminals, are worshipped at Yasukuni Shrine as deities. Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi has gone to the

shrine four times since becoming prime minister in April 2001, saying he is praying for peace in tribute to those who sacrificed their lives for their country.

Koizumi still goes to pay his respects every year, although he avoided visiting the shrine in August, the anniversary of the end of war. Several other Cabinet ministers and dozens of lawmakers also make annual visits. Such visits have long been a flashpoint between Japan and China as well as other Asian neighbors, who still harbor bitter memories of Japan's wartime aggression.

Worshipping at the shrine is "unacceptable," Wang said, adding that the issue is not a domestic or cultural issue for Japan but a diplomatic one.

"I hope Japanese leaders would think twice and try to avoid hurting the feelings of the Chinese for our friendship and long-term benefit," he said.

Speaking in Parliament Monday, Koizumi again defended his visits.

"I understand [the shrine visit] is an unpleasant event for China," Koizumi said



China's new ambassador to Japan, Wang Yi, is unhappy about Japanese leaders' visits to the Yasukuni Shrine, saying the shrine glorifies Japanese wartime aggression.

during a parliamentary committee session.

"But I don't think it is right to conform so easily to what another country says is wrong just because they have a different opinion about how to honor the dead."

Koizumi has repeatedly said in the past he would continue his annual visits to Yasukuni despite protests from Asian nations.

China, South Korea and other Asian countries that suffered from Japan's aggression in the early 1900s have protested when Japanese leaders have visited the shrine.

Efforts to create a national cemetery that could serve as a secular alternative to Yasukuni have been thwarted by Japanese conservatives.

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Japan strives to convey neutrality on U.S. vote

The Associated Press

TOKYO — Japan's prime minister on Monday insisted that ties with the United States won't change if Democratic candidate John Kerry wins the presidential election, despite Tokyo's close relationship with President Bush.

Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi has been a vocal supporter of the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq, and he said last week that he hoped the Republican president would "do well" in the Nov. 2 contest with Kerry.

Koizumi defended his comments on Monday under questioning in Japan's parliament from opposition lawmakers, who have accused him of interfering in the U.S. election and possibly damaging relations with Washington should Kerry win.

"I don't see what the problem is. I made clear that I wasn't interfering in another country's election," Koizumi said. "I see no change in Japan-U.S. [relations] under Bush, or under Kerry."

Koizumi and Bush have strengthened the U.S.-Japan alliance in the past three years, and Tokyo has deployed some 550 troops to support Iraq on a humanitarian mission, despite strong public opposition in Japan.



Koizumi

Palestinian minister: U.S. election stalls diplomacy efforts in Middle East

The Associated Press

LONDON — Palestinian Foreign Minister Nabil Shaath said Monday that the U.S. presidential election was stalling the Middle East peace process and urged other countries to increase their efforts.

Following talks in London with British Foreign Secretary Jack Straw, Shaath said Palestinians were paying the price of America being distracted in the run-up to the Nov. 2 poll.

"I keep saying really that we have many times to pay for these American elections unfairly," Shaath told a news conference.

"During an American election and the three months after, allies

of the United States should do more work than they would do otherwise."

He noted that the hiatus could continue until January 2005, when either President Bush or his Democratic challenger John Kerry is sworn in.

"I do not think the three coming months should just witness Palestinians getting killed. I think something can be done by America's friends and allies, and I think Britain is very well situated to do that."

The United States was one of the key sponsors — along with the European Union, the United Nations and Russia — of the "road map" peace plan, which stalled shortly after it was launched in June 2003.

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Celebrating Mikoshi in Yokosuka

The Mikoshi Day Parade has been held annually in Japan for the past 28 years. Mikoshis are portable wooden Shinto shrines that vary in size and are carried by hand through the streets. Sailors from Yokosuka Naval Base have participated in the event for the past 11 years, with the ceremony ending on the base track field. Above: Residents of the Yokosuka community play taiko drums Sunday during this year's parade.

Left, top and bottom: Parade participants carry a traditional Mikoshi through Yokosuka Naval Base.



PHOTOS BY BRIAN NARANJO/Courtesy of the U.S. Navy

Good music and beautiful sunsets

Left: Blues musician Hiro Tsunoda belts out a soulful melody while keeping the beat on the drums during a free concert at Atsugi Naval Air Facility, Japan, on Saturday. Tsunoda and his band topped off several hours of local musical entertainment.

Bottom left: A child enjoys the music with his family. The concert was open to the public.

Bottom right: A red sunset, silhouetting nearby Mount Oyama and distant tourist attraction Mount Fuji, greets attendees at the concert.



IN THE STATES

High court orders Texas redistricting review

BY GINA HOLLAND
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Supreme Court handed Democrats a victory Monday, ordering a lower court to reconsider a Texas redistricting plan that could give Republicans six more seats and a firm hold on their majority in the House.

The decision won't affect next month's elections, though any GOP gains on Nov. 2 could be wiped out later if the plan ultimately is deemed unconstitutional. States must redraw boundaries every 10 years to reflect population shifts during election censuses.

Five appeals over the Texas boundary-drawing pose an interesting question: Can political leaders of a Legislature force district drawing more frequently than once a decade, to make more seats winnable for members of their party? The case has been exceedingly contentious. Democratic legislators twice staged walkouts from the Texas Legislature to protest dis-

trict-drawing that benefited Republican candidates.

And House Majority Leader Tom DeLay, R-Texas, was admonished recently by the House ethics committee for getting too involved. In a brief order, justices threw out a victory for Texas Republican legislators, and ordered a three-judge federal panel in Texas to reconsider the issue.

The Supreme Court has been divided on how much politics should be allowed in redistricting. In a 5-4 ruling last spring, justices left a narrow opening for challenges claiming party politics overly influenced election maps.

The court said Monday that the Texas map should be viewed again, in light of that decision. Texas lawmakers failed to pass new maps for the state's 32 House seats in 2001, after the census numbers were in, so a federal court drew up a plan.

Republicans took control of the Legislature after 2002 elections and started working on another map early in 2003. Democrats in the state House and Senate staged

quorum-breaking walkouts in an attempt to kill GOP-led bills, but the Republicans ultimately prevailed. The Texas delegation is now even at 16-16. But because of the redrawn districts Republicans could hold out to 22 seats after the election.

DeLay had pressed state lawmakers to redraw districts. Democrats complained and the bipartisan House ethics committee determined earlier this month that DeLay, the No. 2 House Republican, raised "serious concerns" by contacting the Federal Aviation Administration last year to help locate Democratic lawmakers who fled to Oklahoma in an effort to thwart passage of the DeLay-engineered redistricting plan.

Washington attorney Paul M. Smith, one of the attorneys for opponents of the new map, said in a Supreme Court filing that the Texas experience "is proof that the redistricting process in this country has gone completely haywire."

Also Monday, the Supreme Court declined to reinstate a lawsuit filed by a former Georgia representative who

claimed her loss in the 2002 Democratic primary resulted from wide-scale Republican crossover voting.

The court let stand a 11th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruling that threw out Democrat Cynthia McKinney's lawsuit, citing a lack of sufficient evidence. The ruling said the Democratic Party is free to hold an open primary.

Also Monday, the court refused to consider whether former Arkansas Gov. Jim Guy Tucker was wrongly barred from raising new arguments in challenging his 1998 conviction for tax conspiracy. Tucker pleaded guilty to the charge, but now wants to have his conviction overturned based on new information.

The Supreme Court also declined Monday to resurrect a lawsuit by three California women who say Planned Parenthood withholds information linking abortions to breast cancer. The court, without comment, let stand a decision by the California Supreme Court dismissing the suit and ordering the women to pay more than \$77,000 in attorneys' fees.

AF Academy dean points to improvements

BY ROBERT WELLER
The Associated Press

AIR FORCE ACADEMY, Colo. — Brig. Gen. Dana Born, the newly appointed academic dean of the Air Force Academy, said the institution has emerged stronger after a sexual assault scandal that led to widespread reforms and a leadership shake-up.

Nearly 150 women came forward last year to say they had been assaulted by fellow cadets between 1993-2003, with many alleging that they were punished, ignored or ostracized by commanders when they spoke out.

In an interview in her office, Born said, "We all have to become smarter about how we see sexual assault and sexual harassment," adding the scandal "was the lightning rod that hit the Air Force Academy."

Nominated by President Bush in July, Born is the first woman to be faculty dean. She succeeds Brig. Gen. David A. Wagie, who was criticized last year by a congressional panel for failing to recognize the academy's growing sexual assault problem. Cleared by the Pentagon of any wrongdoing, Wagie retired in August.

In a statement Born sent to faculty members, she told them to watch for signs of trouble — everything from "pronounced changes" in academic performance and conduct to a failure to perform assignments.

Lt. Gen. John Rosa, the academy's superintendent brought in at the height of the scandal, is pushing the staff to make sure gender, discrimination and harassment issues are part of virtually every class.

Cadets have had lectures about the need for treating each other with respect, and detailed explanations of what constitutes sexual assault. Every cadet takes annual classes in ethics and leadership.

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On the issues



Can the U.S. government achieve a balanced budget this decade?

President Bush



"My administration inherited a recession and that was followed by the shock of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, which produced budget deficits. During my administration, we have reduced the rate of growth for non-security discretionary spending from the

15 percent growth rate in the last budget year of the previous administration to less than 1 percent in my 2005 budget. My 2005 budget contains detailed plans for pro-growth economic policies and spending restraint that will cut the deficit in half in five years."

Sen. John Kerry



"We've suffered record deficits under George Bush as the size of government has exploded, and that's why I stand by a sensible plan that will cut the deficit in half in my first term, while investing in economic growth

and investing in workers. To restore fiscal discipline I will repeal Bush's tax cuts for the wealthy, cut excesses in government and implement the McCain-Kerry Commission on corporate welfare to cut special tax loopholes and pork barrel spending projects."

AP

Kerry campaigns in Fla. as Bush speaks in N.J.

BY MARY DALRYMPLE

The Associated Press

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. — Florida voters started casting early ballots for U.S. president on Monday, and Democratic candidate John Kerry was to spend all day asking for their support in this crucial state that decided the last election.

President Bush was to give a speech about security in New Jersey, arguing that his battle plan for fighting terrorists is better than his rival's.

Polls show the two candidates running neck-and-neck in Florida as well as across the nation, although some recent national polls give Bush a slight edge.

With a little more than two weeks before the Nov. 2 election, early voting started Monday in Texas, Colorado, Arkansas as well as Florida. Other key states this year have already begun voting, including Wisconsin, Iowa, Nevada, Ohio, New Mexico and Pennsylvania. Balloting by mail is under way in Oregon, the only state that has done away with polling booths altogether.

Campaigning in West Palm Beach, Kerry criticized the president's conduct in Iraq and urged voters to take advantage of laws that allow Florida residents to cast their ballots before Election Day.

Early voting was introduced in

Florida after the draw-out recount in the 2000 election, in which Bush defeated Al Gore by a mere 537 votes across the state.

Kerry referred to a report in The Washington Post that the U.S. commander in Iraq, Army Lt. Gen. Ricardo S. Sanchez, said last winter that his supply situation was so poor that it threatened the troops' ability to fight, and said Bush was guilty of "arrogant boasting" about Iraq.

"Despite the president's arrogant boasting that he's done everything right in Iraq and that he's made no mistakes, the truth is beginning to catch up with him," Kerry said. "The president's tough talk about always supporting the troops is nothing more than empty rhetoric."

The Bush-Cheney campaign struck back, saying Kerry voted against money for Iraq and Afghanistan.

"John Kerry has demonstrated his ability to say anything at anytime to anyone if it benefits him politically," said spokesman Steve Schmidt.

Florida, which gave Bush the victory in the controversial 2000 election by a razor-thin margin, remains a battleground this year, and Bush planned a campaign trip to the state later Monday as well.

Whichever candidate gets more votes in Florida captures all 27 of its electoral votes. A total of 270 electoral votes is needed to win the presidency.

The two campaigns traded accusations of using scare tactics to win support.

Bush, flying from Washington to New Jersey, accused Kerry of alarming voters by suggesting that the president would jeopardize Social Security for older Americans and bring back the military draft for young people.

Bush said the United States will remain "on alert" about the possibility of a terrorist strike on U.S. soil before the election, but said, "we have no specific threat information on that. Otherwise, we would have let people know."

Campaigning in Fort Myers, Fla., Kerry's running mate, John Edwards, accused Bush of using scare tactics and exploiting the Sept. 11 attacks for personal political gain.

"George Bush is playing on people's deepest fears," Edwards said. "He's exploiting a national tragedy for personal gain."

Bush is hoping his message about fighting terrorism will resonate with voters in New Jersey, where surveys show that national security and terrorism are top campaign issues. Nearly 700 New Jersey residents died when hijacked airplanes flew into the World Trade Center's Twin Towers.

Before heading to New Jersey, Bush signed a bill giving the Department of Homeland Security about \$33 billion for the budget year that began Oct. 1.

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Baby delivered after car wreck

The Associated Press

MARINE, Ill. — Her name is America, and her birth was close to miraculous.

America Lynn Rae Bartlett was born Saturday at Barnes-Jewish Hospital in St. Louis, only a short time after her parents' car was ripped in two in a terrifying crash on Interstate 70 in Illinois' Madison County.

The infant's father, Alan Bartlett, 21, recently survived 11 months as a soldier in Iraq without being wounded. But he almost didn't survive his trip from Fort Leonard Wood, Mo., to his home in the village of Munnsville, in Madison County, N.Y.

Alan Bartlett was at the wheel when his small car was involved in a four-vehicle crash near Marine shortly after 3:30 p.m. Saturday. His wife, Kelley, 19, who was eight months pregnant, was his passenger.

Alan Bartlett's mother, Sheila Bartlett, was driving another vehicle ahead of her son. With her was a daughter, Jessica Bartlett, and the two children of Alan and Kelley Bartlett, a boy, 1, and a girl who will be 2 in December.

According to the Illinois State Police, an eastbound tractor-trail-

er driven by Dennis Lucas, 36, of Montezuma, Ind., sideswiped Alan and Kelley Bartlett's eastbound Pontiac Sunbird as the truck was changing lanes. Alan Bartlett lost control of his small car, and it went across the median before being struck by a westbound vehicle driven by Connie Hammond, 42, of Highland, Ill.

The impact tore the Sunbird in half, with part of the car landing off the road and the other part flying through the air and striking a westbound Veniece police car driven by Officer Timothy Fisk Jr., 23.

Alan Bartlett was treated at Anderson Hospital and released, and Kelley Bartlett was in good condition Sunday at Barnes-Jewish, where doctors performed an emergency Caesarean section to deliver a premature but apparently healthy baby girl.

Hammond was the only person seriously hurt; she was still in a hospital on Sunday.

"I guess God is really looking over my brother and our family," said Alan Bartlett's sister, Leigh Bartlett, Sunday from her home in Munnsville, 25 miles east of Syracuse.

She said police said the seriousness of the injuries was limited because all of the victims were wearing seat belts.

Arson suspect a killer?

BRENTWOOD, Calif. — Preliminary information suggests that a man who apparently committed suicide after setting a fire in Yosemite National Park had earlier killed his wife and two young daughters, police said.

The bodies of Michelle Celebrini, 32, and her daughters, 6-year-old Nina Celebrini and 9-year-old Samantha Fouch, were found Saturday in their home in Brentwood, about 50 miles east of San Francisco.

The same day, rangers in a remote area of the national park's Hetch Hetchy basin found the body of Richard Celebrini, who they believe ignited a 2,000-acre blaze in the area.

Irishman dead at 105

NEW YORK — William Geary, an ex-superintendent with the Irish Garda Siochana police, who was fired in 1929 and spent seven decades trying to clear his name, died of heart failure Oct. 14 at a Queens hospital, the Irish Times reported Monday. He was 105.

Geary left Ireland when he was dismissed, accused of taking a \$180 bribe from the Irish Republican Army in Kilrush Co Clare, Ireland, where he was stationed. It took up until 1999 that Ireland's former justice minister John D'onnoghue pardoned Geary.

Tour bus accident

MARION, Ill. — A tour bus taking people home from a charity event ran off a highway and overturned, injuring dozens of passengers, authorities said.

The bus was en route from Chicago to Holly

Springs, Miss., with 42 people on board when it ran off the pavement of Interstate 57 and overturned late Sunday, said Jamie Mook, a state police dispatcher.

Authorities said the bus passengers were residents of Tennessee and Mississippi who were returning home after participating in a prostate cancer fund-raiser in Chicago.

Eleven people were being treated at Herrin Hospital, nursing supervisor Martha McDonald said.

Butterfly migration

AUSTIN — The annual migration of monarch butterflies that crosses Texas en route to Central Mexico is the smallest in 14 years, experts say.

Hundreds of millions of the large, colorful butterflies migrate to near Mexico City from the United States and Canada each fall. But herbicides, changing farming practices and weather are apparent culprits in reducing the numbers.

The migration funnels through a 300-mile-wide corridor from Oklahoma City to Del Rio before crossing the border.

School plot arrest

PLYMOUTH, Mass. — A high school student whose tip about a planned Columbine-style massacre landed his friend in jail was arrested Monday and charged with being a conspirator in the plot.

Joseph T. Nee, 18, a senior at Marshfield High School whose father heads the main Boston police union, pleaded innocent to conspiracy to commit mass murder and promotion of anarchy. He was ordered held without bail.

From The Associated Press

Kentucky cashing in on off-roading

By ROGER ALFORD

The Associated Press

HARLAN, Ky. — Out-of-state license plates tell the story of eastern Kentucky's rising popularity among off-roaders.

Pickup trucks bearing tags from as far away as Florida and Ohio roll through town, some pulling trailers laden with all-terrain vehicles, others carrying heavy rock-crawling machines, on their way to some of Kentucky's harshest terrain.

"They're pouring into a region where coal mining has turned mountain tops into off-roader paradise.

"They love it here," said Preston McClain, a member of the group Harlan County Ridge Runners who guides visitors on rides along the Kentucky-Virginia line. "We've got views from these mountaintops that you don't find anywhere else."

Thousands of miles of rocky, rutted mountain roads have made eastern Kentucky a primary destination for a growing number of people who ride all-terrain vehicles or plod cross-country in four-wheel-drive trucks and SUVs with tires that look like they came off a farm tractor.

Andy Jones, director of strategic development in Harlan County, wants to capitalize on the phenomenon to rejuvenate a local

economy as rocky as any of the backwoods trails.

While some other communities have frowned on off-roaders, Harlan County welcomes them. Jones said people in Harlan want to draw more riders to spend money in hotels, restaurants and shops.

"People are serious about it," he said. "I see tremendous potential. This is part of the strategy we have to improve the economy of our county."

Harlan County leaders have leased 7,000 acres of abandoned coal mine land, complete with an assortment of rugged trails and roads, and are working on adding about 30,000 additional acres.

That land is open to the non-stressful off-road vehicles, ATVs, even dirt bikes, and has already begun to pay off, said Ronnie Shoop, a member of the group Kentucky Mountain Crawlers.

Shoop said liability issues can be a problem for off-roaders on private land. Harlan County solved the problem by leasing the land and accepting the liability. The county leaders hope to be able to apply revenues from coal-severance taxes to the cost of insurance.

"This probably is the single best tourism plan," Shoop said.

"It's not only going to give local people something to do, but it will create a market for people to come from out of town."



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Study: Race wealth gap grew after recession

White households regained lost assets faster than blacks, Hispanics

By GENARO C. ARMAS
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The enormous wealth gap between white families and blacks and Hispanics grew larger after the most recent recession, a private analysis of government data finds.

White households had a median net worth of greater than \$88,000 in 2002, 11 times more than Hispanics and more than 14 times that of blacks, the Pew Hispanic Center said in a study being released Monday.

Blacks were slowest to emerge from the economic downturn that started in 2000 and ended in late 2001, the report found.

Net worth accounts for the values of items such as a home and car, checking and savings accounts, and stocks, minus debts such as mortgage, car loans and credit card bills.

Greater wealth means a greater ability to weather a job loss, emergency home repairs, illness

and other unexpected costs, as well as being able to save for retirement or a child's college tuition.

According to the group's analysis of Census Bureau data, nearly one-third of black families and 26 percent of Hispanic families were in debt or had no net assets, compared with 11 percent of white families.

"Wealth is a measure of cumulative advantage or disadvantage," said Roderick Harrison, a researcher at the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies, a Washington think tank that focuses on black issues.

"The fact that black and Hispanic wealth is a fraction of white wealth also reflects a history of discrimination."

After accounting for inflation, net worth for white households increased 17 percent between 1996 and 2002 and rose for Hispanic homes by 14 percent to about \$7,900. It decreased for blacks by 16 percent, to roughly \$6,000.

Regardless of race and ethnicity, the median net worth for all U.S. households was \$59,700 in 2002, a 12 percent gain from 1996.

Only white homes recouped all their losses between 2001 and 2002. Both Hispanics and blacks lost nearly 27 percent of net worth between 1999 and 2001; the next year Latinos had gained almost all back (26 percent) though blacks were up only about 5 percent.

Roberto Suro, director of the Pew Hispanic Center, said the accumulation of wealth allows low-income families to rise into the middle class and "have some kind of assets beyond next week's paychecks."

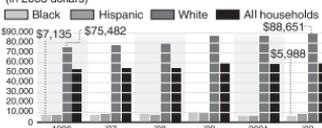
"Having more assets enabled whites to ride out the jobless recovery better," he said.

Harrison says Hispanics were more insulated from the downturn than blacks, so they took less of a hit. For example, Hispanics made employment gains in

Wide gap in net worth among races

Since 1996, the net worth of white households has increased while that of black households has decreased, according to a study by the Pew Hispanic Center. White households still have 14 times greater net worth than blacks and Hispanics.

Median net worth of households by race and ethnicity (in 2003 dollars)



NOTE: Net worth is total asset ownerships including property, interest earnings, checking accounts, savings bonds, retirement accounts, stocks and funds, business, vehicles and other assets; 2000 data not available; all households includes Asians and others

SOURCE: Pew Hispanic Center

AP

lower-paid, lower-skilled areas such as the service and construction sectors.

Blacks were hit hard by job losses

in the manufacturing industry and in professional fields, where they were victims of "last hired, first fired" policies, he said.

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IMPORTANT

FACES

Love trying to settle legal fees dispute

Rocker Courtney Love's attorneys and a prominent law firm have agreed to try settling a dispute over legal fees out of court.

Superior Court Judge Gerald Rosenberg gave Love's lawyers and Manatt, Phelps & Phillips, LLP until Feb. 5 to reach a settlement.

The two sides must report back on any agreement on Feb. 9, said Dane Gambill, a courtroom assistant. If no agreement is reached, the judge could then set a trial date.

Last November, the firm sued Love. Hole band mate Eric Erlandson and a company that owns the recording services of the band's members over claims of unpaid lawyer fees. The firm has represented Love in contractual matters.

Love, the widow of Nirvana singer Kurt Cobain, was formerly the lead singer of Hole. She had to delay a concert tour with her new band this year because of various legal problems.

Jackson 5 has hosted a weekly radio show on KDLF KDLE-FM on which she plays recordings from her own collection as well as from the station's archives. The show runs through the end of October.

Jesse Jackson's birthday gets political

The Rev. Jesse Jackson celebrated his election-themed 63rd birthday party at a swank hotel, surrounded by California Democratic leaders and celebrity activists.

"It is, at once, my 63rd birthday and it is also mobilizing friends for a 19-day countdown to the Nov. 2 election," he said during a press conference before the party Thursday at the Beverly Hilton hotel.

Jackson urged people to get out and work "to stop the schemes of voter suppression," referring to allegations by federal civil rights monitors that the ballots of black Florida voters in 2000 were disproportionately tossed out due to faulty machinery and ballot problems.

Parties at the party included film maker Michael Moore, activist actor Mike Farrell, former Gov. Gray Davis and U.S. Rep. Maxine Waters.



Jackson

Judge wants Britney's explanation

A federal judge has ordered Britney Spears to explain why she failed to respond to a pre-emptive lawsuit filed by a diet supplement maker, who claims the pop star's lawyers threatened to sue for using her image without permission in marketing.

The complaint originated in a moment of clumsiness, when Spears was seen spilling a bottle of diet supplement Zantrex-3 at London's Heathrow airport in October 2003 and scrambling to pick up the pills.

The fumble was captured by a flock of paparazzi, and London's Daily Express devoted a whole page to the incident.

A trio of Utah companies behind the supplement capitalized on the accidental spilling. In a subsequent ruling, but they claimed Spears' lawyers ordered them to stop citing the episode or they would be sued.

Zoller Laboratories LLC, DG Enterprises and Star Research LLC are asking a federal judge to declare they have violated no federal or state law with their marketing practices.



Spears

Prince music video creates controversy

The musician Prince is drawing fire for a new video that portrays an Arab-American girl envionishing herself blowing up an airport.

The video for the song "Cinnamon Girl" shows the girl, played by 14-year-old Oscar nominee Keisha Castle-Hughes of the movie "Whale Rider," facing harassment from Christians and witnessing racism in the wake of an attack that mirrors 9/11.

Steve Silberfarb, president of the Jewish Community Relations Council of Minnesota, said he applauds the anti-harassment message, but found a dream sequence in which the girl detonates a bomb at an airport disturbing.

Prince turned down an interview request through his Los Angeles-based publicist, Ronnie Lipman, who said the entertainment goal was to provoke a discussion about the issues raised in the video. "If people are reacting with concern, I think the conversation is starting," she said.

Stories and photos from wire services



Moviegators watch a free showing in July of Michael Moore's "Fahrenheit 9/11" on a field in Crawford, Texas. President Bush's supporters also gathered to protest the showing of the movie.

AP photos

Filmmakers bring politics to the screen

Editor's note: Arts and entertainment have long converged with politics. But this year, something different is in the air and on movie screens, in bookstores, on the radio, and everywhere else media is consumed. This is the second part of the six-part series.

BY DAVID GERMAIN
The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — The vote is in: Political matters have become viable candidates on the big screen, with filmmakers and audiences roused by curiosity, patriotism or indignation to explore critical issues of the times.

Usually relegated to Sunday morning TV roundtables, current events and political content have become as commonplace in theaters as presidential wannabes in Iowa early in an election year.

Michael Moore's President Bush-bashing "Fahrenheit 9/11" has led the way, but dozens of other documentaries and a handful of dramatized films have arisen in the aftermaths of the 2000 election loss, the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks and the war on terrorism.

Moviegators have made mini-hits out of such theatrical releases as "Control Room," an examination of Arab TV network Al-Jazeera's coverage of the Iraq war, and "The Fog of War," Errol Morris' Academy Award-winning compendium of Robert S. McNamara's insights on modern history and combat.

Political documentaries such as "Unprecedented: The 2000 Presidential Election," "Uncovered: The War on Iraq" and "Outfoxed: Rupert Murdoch's War on Journalism" have sold briskly on DVD.

"The voting public is energized," Moore said last summer, after "Fahrenheit 9/11" became the first documentary to top \$100 million at the domestic box office. "They are anxious to discuss politics, and I think since September 11, the American people have wanted to find out more of what's going on in the world."

Filmmakers and distributors have rushed in to satisfy that inquisitiveness. Other issue-driven films newly released on film or DVD include "Horns and Hooves," chronicling the saga of J.H. Hatfield's biography of President Bush "Fortunate Son," "Going Upriver: The Long War of John Kerry" and "Brothers in Arms," which explore the Democratic presidential candidate's Vietnam record and his subsequent stand against the war; "The Yes Men," following two anti-corporate pranksters posing as World Trade Organization representatives; "The Hunting of the President," examining efforts by Bill Clinton's enemies to overthrow his administration; and "The War Room," the documentary hit about Clinton's 1992 campaign.

"I think this is the high-water mark for political filmmaking. I don't think it's the end of the rising tide," said filmmaker Steve Rosenbaum, who is making "Inside the Bubble," a behind-the-scenes glimpse of the Kerry campaign.

"Under Clinton, we went through eight years in which things were kind of OK, the economy was going great, with the dot-com thing, everybody was going to be a millionaire. Now we're on the back end of that. People are waking up, wondering, 'Where the hell is Sudan? Where is the Gaza

Strip? What did we do in Afghanistan?"

That sense of bewilderment people have been feeling leaves intelligent people thinking.

Documentary directors tend to be left-leaning people, so the rush of political films reflects that liberal bent. But some films have delved into the conservative side or attempted to counter liberal viewpoints, among them "Bush's Brain," a portrait of the president's chief adviser, Karl Rove; "George W. Bush: Faith in the White House"; and two documentaries rebutting Moore's work, "Michael Moore Hates America" and "Fahrenheit 9/11."

To an extent, the surge in political interest has spilled over to fictional films. "South Park" creators Trey Parker and Matt Stone's "Team America: World Police" parodies the U.S. war on terror using a cast of puppets. Denzel Washington starred in last summer's remake of the assassination thriller "The Manchurian Candidate," which used the Persian Gulf War as the root for a plot to usurp the White House. Robert Redford is developing a sequel to his 1972 political satire "The Candidate."

As with other forms of independent filmmaking, digital technology has helped swell the ranks of documentary directors.

What used to be a prohibitively expensive endeavor for cameras, lighting and film stock now can be undertaken by anyone with an idea and a few thousand dollars for a digital camera.

Commercial success of Moore's "Bowling for Columbine" and other documentary hits have broadened audience and distributor interest in nonfiction films in general.

"Though audiences have embraced political films, the movie's potential to influence the elections is uncertain."



Giving away copies of his books and films on Oct. 1, Moore greets some members of the audience at Metropolitan Park in Jacksonville, Fla.



Best convicted

PA PHILADELPHIA — A man charged with shooting at a group of children following a snowball fight was convicted of attempted murder and other offenses.

Police said Joseph Best, 34, fired the shots into a crowd in West Philadelphia in February 2003 because he was angry that his daughter had been struck in the head by a snowball. Ten-year-old Ebony Smith was wounded in the shooting and spent two months in the hospital.

Jurors convicted Best of attempted murder, aggravated assault and weapons offenses. He will be sentenced in December. Best's fiancée, Cynthia Powell, 38, was acquitted of all charges other than weapons offenses.

"We wanted the person who pulled the trigger, Joseph Best," said Carol Smith, Ebony's mother, "and we got him."

Disastrous mistake

GA CORDELE — There was no "Day After Tomorrow" for Charles Alton Adams' mobile home, which the south Georgia man told police he set on fire after watching the disaster movie and drinking beer.

Adams, 32, walked into the Crisp County Law Enforcement Center and told deputies he had burned down the doublewide home.

He told deputies that after watching "The Day After Tomorrow," a special-effects extravaganza depicting deadly natural disasters caused by global warming, and drinking nine or 10 beers, he decided to set fire to pillows on his bed.

When asked why, Crisp County Sheriff Donnie Haralson said, "I have asked that question myself.... The whole thing just doesn't really make sense."

Haralson said Adams was being charged with arson. He remained jailed as family members attempted to raise money for his bond.

Firefighter gets the boot

TX FORT WORTH — A veteran firefighter from the Southlake Department of Public Safety has been fired for supervising the hosing down of the Southlake Carroll band and color guard, injuring 13 students.

Also, a firefighter was suspended without pay for 120 days and a fire captain was given a one-day suspension without pay for involvement in the Aug. 4 event in the parking lot of Carroll High School.

Fire Lt. Jeff Powell, a 14-year veteran, was fired.

An internal investigation showed the three employees violated department safety policies. At times, the students were hit directly by the water; it was not directed over their heads, according to Southlake reports.

The band and color guard were hosed down as part of a spirit-motivating exercise.

Gun turned in

CA LOS ANGELES — The head of the police department's counterterrorism bureau has turned in the unlicensed handgun that airport screeners found in his carry-on luggage last month.

"He did it voluntarily," Sgt.



AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Catherine Plows, a police spokeswoman, said. "He just thought there was a lot of unnecessary press about it when there didn't need to be."

The police department had assigned John Miller the .38-caliber Smith & Wesson, but it was never registered because of a paperwork glitch, officials said.

Miller, an ABC-TV reporter before he was hired for the security job, was off duty and traveling to New York to tape a farewell message for Barbara Walters, the retiring former "20/20" co-host, when airport officials discovered the gun.

He also turned in a second, licensed handgun and a sport utility vehicle equipped with a siren and emergency lights. Both were issued by the police department.

Democrats win in court

NH CONCORD — Democrats won a court victory allowing them to further investigate the illegal jamming of Democratic phone lines on Election Day 2002.

The party planned, through depositions, to try to compel state Republican officials to disclose whether higher-level GOP operatives were involved in the jamming, state Democratic Chairwoman Kathy Sullivan said.

"We want to know the names of

everybody involved," she said.

"We want to know where the money came from."

The jamming involved computer-generated calls to Democratic lines and one operated by the non-partisan Manchester firefighters' union, set up for voters who needed rides to the polls. More than 800 hang-up calls tied up phones for about 1½ hours.

The calls sparked a federal investigation that led former state GOP executive director Chuck McGee to plead guilty in July. He admitted paying \$15,600 to a Virginia telemarketing company that hired another business to call a handful of Democratic offices around the state.

Car safety questioned

IL BELLEVILLE — A jury in the first class-action lawsuit filed over the safety of Ford's Crown Victoria police cruisers ruled that the cars are safe, but a judge must now decide if the automaker violated state consumer fraud laws.

Class-action lawsuits are pending in at least 12 states over the Crown Victoria Police Interceptor, a specially built police cruiser that accounts for the majority of police cars on U.S. streets.

Since 1983, at least 15 officers nationwide have died in fiery crashes after their Crown Victorias were rear-ended — including one in Texas last month. Ford Motor Co. contends the deaths reflect officers' risky work rather than a design flaw.

Shooting investigation

VA NEWPORT NEWS — Police were investigating an incident in which a man in a car was shot and killed by officers after one officer was pinned between the man's car and a parked vehicle.

Police spokesman Lou Thurston said three officers on bicycles who had approached the car in the 900 block of 27th Street issued a distress call.

The man in the car, whose identity was not available, was shot after he attempted to run down one officer, Thurston said.

The man was pronounced dead at the scene with a gunshot wound to the torso. His body was sent to the medical examiner's office in Norfolk.

Guilty plea in porn case

VT BRATTLEBORO — A Rockingham man could go to prison for up to 20 years after he pleaded guilty to child pornography charges in federal court.

Ronald E. Frohock, 52, had been set to go to trial on the charges before he accepted a plea agreement. Under the agreement, Darrow agreed to dismiss 10 additional indictments against Frohock for the distribution of child pornography.

"There is absolutely no question about the ages of the children depicted," prosecutor William Darrow said in court documents.

"They were many years under the age of 18."

Sentencing is set for January. U.S. District Court Judge J. Garvan Murtha could hand Frohock a sentence of up to 20 years imprisonment. Based on several prior sex offense convictions in New Hampshire, Frohock will have to spend a minimum sentence of 10 years in incarceration.



Fishy snapshot

Donald Lamkin, 63, of Corpus Christi, Texas, sits inside a giant Fiberglass shark's head as he urges fairgoers to pay to have their photo made inside the shark's jaws during opening night of the 2004 South Texas State Fair in Beaumont, Texas.



Park fun

Frateral twins Max, left, and Harry Evans, 17 months, fill a nutshell with water from the water fountain at Triangle Park in Birmingham, Ala.



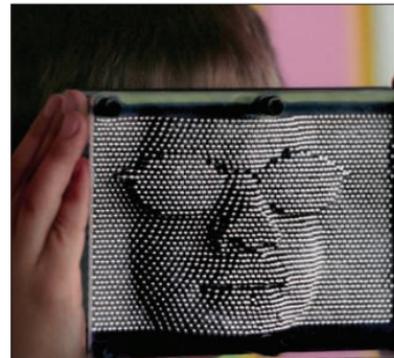
Street chitchat

Lincoln Elementary School crossing guard Amy Ramirez talks to sixth-graders, left, Eva Betancourt, 11, Damaris Morene, 11, and first-grader Joanna Villagran, 6, before they cross Center Street in Mesa, Ariz.



Sweet rewards

Louisiana State University mass communications major Casey Gioia, 17, from New Orleans, La., concentrates as she places another Oreo cookie on her stack at the Highland Cafeteria on campus in Baton Rouge, La. She successfully stacked 48 of the cookies before it collapsed on the 49th. Contestants competed for top prize of an Oreo cookie jar.



Science is fun

Aidan Ziegler-Hansen, 9, tries out a Pin Art kit offered at the Science Factory store in Eugene, Ore. Hansen is part of the after-school science club at the Science Factory, which just started selling toys.



Church move

Marble Lutheran Church's 100-mile journey comes to an end as the church arrives at the shores of St. Andrew Camp in New London, Minn.

Ferry's future unknown

ME PORTLAND — The cruise ferry Scotia Prince makes its last overnight voyage of the season from Portland to Yarmouth, Nova Scotia, but its future after that is uncertain.

Despite \$10 million spent on improvements to the ship, ridership dropped by 23 percent this year, according to Scotia Prince Cruises, which plans to keep the vessel in Portland over the winter while its owners decide whether to continue operations next year.

The 35-year-old ferry operation faces problems that go beyond the drop in business.

It could be getting competition from Bay Ferries Ltd., operator of The Cat, the high-speed ferry which now runs between Bar Harbor and Nova Scotia, and is hoping to expand to Portland.

Police officer arrested

HI HONOLULU — A former Honolulu police officer was arrested during a drug raid in Kalihi.

The 61-year-old man and three others arrested in the bust face various drug charges.

Police seized drugs, cash, chemicals and trace crystal methamphetamine and a firearm from the home on Kamehameha IV Road.

In 1992, the then-officer was convicted of criminal conspiracy and sentenced to 10 years in prison for his involvement in five Hawaii Kai-area burglaries.

He provided confidential information he received in his capacity as a police officer and passed it on to another man who burglarized the homes.

Fire cause undetermined

MS JACKSON — Federal officials have completed their investigation of a fraternity house fire that killed three students at the University of Mississippi, including one from Virginia, but they were unable to pinpoint the cause.

The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives issued a report saying the cause of the blaze remains "undetermined."

The report said the fire that killed Howard Stone, 19, of Martinville, Va., William Townsend, 19, of Clarkdale, and Jordan Williams, 20, of Atlanta, started early Aug. 27 in a basement bedroom of the Alpha Tau Omega house. Twenty-three students and a house mother escaped the fire at the two-story, brick-and-wood frame building.

ATF investigators said they found no evidence of foul play, and no evidence that electrical appliances near the fire's origin had failed.

Project nearly complete

ME PORTLAND — Maine's largest public works project in decades, the \$135 million widening of the Maine Turnpike, is just about finished.

The Maine Turnpike Authority will mark the occasion by painting a symbolic "final stripe" and opening the new lane on the last remaining section of the state's busiest highway: the six-mile stretch between Biddeford and Kennebunk.

Some minor landscaping and painting may continue into November, but the paving and major construction are complete.

The project took five years and came in on time and \$2 million under budget.

"You want to be joyful the project is over, but in many ways you kind of hate to see it go because it has gone so well," said Maine Turnpike Authority spokesman Dan Paradee.

Morning fire kills five

KS OLATHE — A pre-dawn house fire killed five members of a family in northeastern Kansas.

Olathe Fire Department spokesman Mike Hall said the fire broke out in the early morning. A son who survived the blaze ran to a neighbor's home and called 911, Hall said.

The victims were identified as Matthew and Rebecca Orr, both 46, and three of their children — Benjamin Orr, 18, Jeremiah Orr, 16, and Kyle Orr, 14. A seventh family member, a college student, was not home when the fire broke out.

Firefighters found four people dead inside the home, and the fifth victim died later at a hospital, Hall said. The son who survived suffered non-life-threatening injuries and was trying to help the victims when firefighters arrived.

A downtown Wal-Mart?

VT ST ALBANS — The Preservation Trust of Vermont is hoping Wal-Mart Stores Inc. will move the store it has planned for the edge of the community to the city's downtown.

Preservation Trust Executive Director Paul Bruhn said he hoped Wal-Mart officials would remember his group's idea if the store or town denies approval for the store outside the city in the town of St. Albans.

Wal-Marts built in rural areas, like the one planned for U.S. 7, can cause sprawl as other national retailers cluster nearby, conservation groups say. Building downtown limits sprawl, leaving green pastures, cornfields and the like untouched.

Wal-Mart has already brushed off a similar recommendation made by Vermont Natural Resources Council.

Shrimp worker shortage

TX BROWNSVILLE — The federal government's cap on temporary foreign workers is forcing some shrimp boats to remain idle as shrimpers try to find crews, fishermen say.

Dolby Linwood's two boats often stay docked because he can't find qualified workers for the trips which often take between 30-50 days, a journey few local workers are willing to make, he said.

"We weren't able to get any [H2-B visas] for this year," Linwood said. "You can't find people here who are dependable. The locals take a trip and they don't want to go back." Linwood has relied in Mexican and Nicaraguan fishermen.

Chris Bentley, a spokesman for U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services in Washington, said plenty of H2-B visas are available for 2005. Applications became available Oct. 1. However, visas can take a minimum of two months to issue for the regular \$185 fee, Bentley said.

Stories and photos from wire services.



Go, fish

Shark Attack, driven by Tyler Wallace, left, races Seafood Chef, driven by Daniel Cardenas, during Petersburg, Alaska's Humpy 500 go-cart races. The annual go-cart race celebrates the end of the salmon canning season on Mitkof Island.

STARS AND STRIPES

OPINION

A learning experience: How they teach

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BY PETER H. GIBBON

There are more than 4 million teachers in America, yet we rarely hear their voices. Many are outstanding but shine unseen, remembered only in their communities and by grateful students.

Perhaps teachers are too busy. Perhaps they have heard too many clichés. Or maybe they know that when the classroom door shuts, they have influence far exceeding that of principals and policy-makers. For whatever reason, teachers rarely speak up, and that is sad. We should therefore be grateful for any glimpse into classrooms, any insight or inspiration from the people who actually instruct our children.

Over the summer I read a number of classroom narratives. The most interesting came from an iconoclastic fifth-grade teacher, "There Are No Shortcuts." Esquith believes that all students can love learning and achieve, despite crumbling school systems, incompetent administrators, foolish curricula and what he thinks is a misguided testing-accountability movement. The answers, according to Esquith, are smart teachers and classic literature, a longer school day and unremitting effort. The enemies are basal readers, dumbed-down tests, rigid unions, professional development classes, unimaginative administrators and incompetent colleagues.

Esquith's story is inspiring. He started teaching middle-class students in Southern California, but he felt that they had too much and he had it too easy, so he moved to Hobart Elementary School in Los Angeles to teach students who lived in poor neighborhoods and knew little English. Esquith has taught at Hobart for 18 years and has become a legend. His students read "The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn" and "The Crucible." They play "Vivaldi," perform "King Lear" and outperform other students on standardized tests. They travel to the Hollywood Bowl, Yosemite National Park and Washington, D.C. In McKeen visits his class.

Hal Holbrook is a patron. Prominent business executives finance some of his trips, and Walt Disney Co. has recognized him with a Teacher of the Year award.

I am not sure that Esquith's saga is replicable or that his stringent program is the answer for all teachers, but his critique of the educational establishment, though strong and sometimes simplistic, is worth our consideration. Esquith insists that teachers must be smart and well-read. Teaching, he says, is a "holy mission" that demands maximum effort and offers the ultimate reward: To be outstanding and transform lives, you don't use prepackaged curricula or worry about state tests, according to Esquith. Basal readers and worksheets bore students. Instead, teach what you love, teach great works of literature, teach Shakespeare and Mark Twain and watch students rise to the challenge. Esquith's vigorous defense of high culture and classics is rare in a profession more worried about diversity than excellence, and a valuable antidote for students inculcated with an entertainment-and-celebrity culture.

Teaching, Esquith insists, is an evolving career. You experiment, make mistakes and self-correct. Esquith may be charismatic, but he is a careful planner. "I don't have a desk in the classroom. I'm on my feet, like soldiers to fight on St. Crispin's Day. I have spent hours planning what chapter we will read. ... Nothing is left to chance."

It would be fair to call Esquith an elitist — an admittedly useful description of a fifth-grade teacher. He has little use for the goal of self-esteem, insisting that skills come first. He believes in "multicultural sensitivity" but argues that this goal has eclipsed educational excellence.

One night he took his students to the Hollywood Bowl to hear Lynn Harrell play Dvorak's cello concerto. Afterward the students went backstage to meet the cellist, and one asked shyly, "Mr. Harrell, how can you make music that sounds that beautiful?" Harrell responded: "Well, there are no shortcuts."

Esquith repeatedly rails against "a society that embraces mediocrity" in schools and culture. When his students go to watch the Dodgers, he instructs them in the history of baseball. When they attend a concert, he insists on good manners.

But he is no ordinary elitist. He teaches Malcolm X as well as Mark Twain. He internalizes the books he loves and learns lessons from his favorite fictional characters. From Huck Finn, he learns to be a social critic. After reading "To Kill a Mockingbird," he aspires to be kind. And he is instructed by his students as well as by books.

[Rafe] Esquith's vigorous defense of high culture and classics is ... a valuable antidote for students inculcated with an entertainment-and-celebrity culture.

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From a 10-year-old student whom he carelessly rebukes, he learns that he can be mean. From a trio of academic superstars who turn hostile, he discovers that he has overemphasized intellectual accomplishment: "Discipline, hard work, perseverance and generosity of spirit are, in the final analysis, far more important."

Esquith may teach traditional texts, but he is not above using progressive insights. When reading "Treasure Island," students dress up as pirates. On Friday his students sit in a "Magic Circle" and share their feelings. He concedes that a good teacher must be a social worker and psychologist as well as a scholar. Esquith is successful because he combines the best of traditional and progressive pedagogy.

He champions mental toughness, unrevered effort, high expectations and good character. Simultaneously, he cultivates personal relationships with his students, insists that learning be relevant and believes in group projects.

Professors urge teachers to be facilitators, not sages. Sociologists lament that teaching is a lonely profession without enough adult interaction. Policy-makers complain about the low test scores of teachers.

Rafe Esquith rebukes the whiners. By his example, he offers a new and heroic model for the teacher — missionary, entrepreneur, rebel, social critic, crusader for the disadvantaged and high culture.

Peter H. Gibbon is the author of "Call a Heroism: Renewing America's Vision of Greatness" and a senior research scholar at Boston University's School of Education. This column first appeared in The Washington Post.

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BY GARRY TRUDEAU



OPINION

Climate's right to determine why species died

BY BETSY MASON

Contra Costa (Calif.) Times

SALWAT CREEK, Calif. — Saber-toothed cats, woolly mammoths and giant ground sloths roamed across North America until 10,000 years ago, when nearly every large mammal on the continent disappeared. For decades, scientists have been trying to uncover why.

Now a University of California research team says the answer could be a harbinger of things to come.

The scientific community has been ripped in two over this issue and tensions run high between those who would blame humans' arrival, thought to be just 1,000 years or so before the extinctions, and those who point to climatic upheaval at the end of the last ice age.

In recent years, evidence against prehistoric humanity has been piling up. But now a team from UC Berkeley and UC Santa Cruz have done the scientific equivalent of a bipartisan look at the evidence and weighed in on the intense debate in the pages of the journal *Science* this month.

"Its verdict is that neither suspect is innocent," it reads.

"It's really a combination of humans and climate change," said UC Berkeley paleobiologist Anthony Barnosky. "It's this one-two punch that's the killer, so to speak."

Today, with a growing population and global warming, both elements of that combination are ramping up at unprecedented rates. It's a situation that could spell disaster for the planet's current crop of large mammals, Barnosky said.

The oldest solid evidence of human presence in central North America dates to some time between 11,000 and 11,500 years ago. This first group, known as the Clovis civilization, was full of hunters who left stone spearheads scattered across the landscape. In a few cases, the spearheads have been found at "kill sites" along with mammoth and mastodon bones.

Around 1,500 years later, mammoths,

mastodons and more than 30 other large North American mammals including camels, rhinos, saber-toothed cats and giant ground sloths, were all extinct. The suspicious timing, along with the kill sites, led many scientists to the idea that humans either hunted these animals into oblivion one by one in a prehistoric blitzkrieg, or at least killed enough to trigger a population collapse.

But cloudbing the picture is the fact that the last ice age was ending at the same time. Glaciers that once covered most of the continent were receding and weather systems and vegetation patterns were undergoing drastic reorganization. Some scientists think the stress of this upheaval was the more likely culprit in the extinctions.

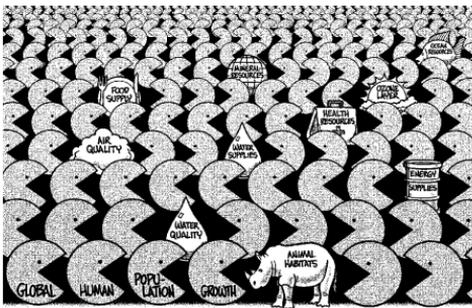
The most likely scenario is that the combination was to blame, said UC Santa Cruz paleobiologist Paul Koch. "Humans were setting this catastrophe in motion, but at the same time there was a strong climate signal."

The picture is somewhat less muddled in other parts of the world that also suffered mass extinctions. In Australia, people arrived around 50,000 years ago and most of the largest animals were gone 10,000 years later, including giant carnivorous kangaroos, horned tortoises the size of Volkswagen Beetles, and 6-foot-tall birds. All the while, climate was relatively stable.

Disagreement persists about whether the Australian extinctions were caused directly by hunting or by people burning the landscape to ease travel and hunting, but most agree that somehow people are to blame.

In Alaska and the Yukon, however, several large animals such as short-faced bears, two species of mammoth and local populations of mammoths all disappeared before there is any evidence of human invasion. The same is true for some species of deer and elk in Ireland. In both cases, climate change coincides with the extinctions.

And in Europe, there is evidence of human hunting for at least 400,000 years with no extinctions. But around 50,000 years ago, when the climate was cooling rapidly,



and 20,000 years ago, when it started heating back up, there are spikes of extinctions.

Similarly, in Africa many large mammals have managed to escape extinction over hundreds of thousands of years of commingling with humans.

All of this evidence from around the globe points to a lethal combination, Barnosky said. "Humans were very much a driving force, but where you really had the most pronounced extinctions is where you had climate change and humans coming together at the same time."

Central North America remains the most controversial, as well as the most studied, case of recent mass extinctions, and each new piece of evidence fuels the debate.

Looking even further back in the history of mammals before humans had evolved, over the last 65 million years extinctions don't match up with major climate changes, said evolutionary biologist John Alroy of UC Santa Barbara.

"There are tons and tons of climate changes in the fossil record of mammals, but these recent mass extinctions are unprecedented," Alroy said. "I think once you got humans onto the [North American] continent, climate became totally irrelevant."

Still, others think humans merely swept into North America for the coup de grace, speeding the inevitable end of a process brought on by climate change.

"Without environmental change, people weren't able to bring them down elsewhere like Africa and Europe," said paleontologist Holmes Senken of the University of Iowa. "So there's got to be more than just people involved."

If Barnosky and Koch are right about human population growth and rapid climate change being a killer combo in the past, they think this could be an important lesson for the future: With global warming potentially heating up the climate at an unprecedented rate, and ever increasing pressure from spiraling population growth, today's large mammals may soon go the way of the mammoth.

National credit-card bill is in, and it draws interest

BY DALE MCFEETERS

Scraps Howard

The deficit figures for the federal fiscal year that ended Sept. 30 are in and they are bad, maybe not quite as bad as predicted, but still bad.

For fiscal 2004, the federal government spent \$413 billion more than it took in, an all-time record in absolute dollars and the largest shortfall since World II in inflation-adjusted dollars.

The Bush administration argues that the deficit is far less than forecast, thus showing economic improvement, and that the deficit is a manageable 3.6 percent of GDP, well below the record 6 percent in 1983. Treasury Secretary John Snow says we're on track to meet President Bush's goal of halving the deficit in five years.

At the start of the year, the White House foresaw a deficit of \$521 billion in a forecast that most analysts regarded as a highball, intentionally overstated so that the White House could later claim, as it is doing now, that the shortfall is not as bad as predicted.

Still, the more restrained forecast of the Congressional Budget Office was for \$477 billion. Even if this year's number could have been worse, it's still a lot more red ink than last year's \$377 billion, itself a record. The nation has been in deficit since 2001 and each succeeding deficit has been larger.

The same with the 3.6 percent of GDP. Yes, it's manageable but it is growing, and it is now the highest since 1993. The Bush administration had hoped to grow its way out of the deficit, but the recession ended in November 2001 and growth has been solid since then.

The Reagan administration did set a record with a deficit that was 6 percent of GDP, but that followed the economically miserable year of 1982, one of the worst since

the Depression. By contrast, 2003 and 2004 have been good economic years.

Says the Center for Budget and Policy Priorities: "Few occasions in U.S. history have produced budget deteriorations this large over a four-year period." ...

How did we get here? The administration's and Congress' relentless focus on cutting taxes and more at all on controlling spending. The president could well finish his first term without ever vetoing a bill. The

administration argues that it has been forced to increase defense spending — and it has by about 20 percent — but nondefense spending is up more than 25 percent. And there is now that costly Medicare drug entitlement.

All this might not matter, but the country has to be in sound economic shape to pay the massive impending health and retirement costs of the baby boom generation. We can't say we haven't been warned.

Mallard Fillmore



BY BRUCE TINSLEY

Horoscope

Venus is rather tense with Pluto, causing us to feel on edge about relationships, especially the ones that blur into the area of personal finance. Thoughts center around the idea of reciprocity, if someone in your life seems to always be the taker, now is the time when you really notice. Do consider the many ways in which one might give, though.

TODAY'S BIRTHDAY

OCTOBER 20. You make a stand this year, and the world is different because of your contribution. Meaningful exchanges this month and next connect you with a romance that's lasting. If already paired up, you'll be traveling together through the holidays and discover a new interest that blossoms into a big money-maker. Love signs are Virgo and Pisces.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). Life's little bumps give you a chance to duck out and do a personal inventory — something you can accomplish in a quiet 15 minutes or take the whole day to do. A relationship that has gotten one-sided will even out.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). Whatever you were procrastinating about can wait no longer. Getting the icky stuff out of the way (and in the process finding out that it wasn't so bad) is the best motivator for doing the rest. You'll be able to flirt this afternoon.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). You can spot a fair deal away. Your laser-sharp intuition about people to put yourself in line company. Begin and end your meetings and appointments on time, and stick to the agenda. Really mean what you are saying.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). Your influence is strong, and your opinion means more than you know. Encourage a loved one who is pursuing a cherished dream. Later, you're the one this person will thank in the acceptance speech.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). Folks are depending in the manner you they think should. As much as you love your friends, you can also find

them frustrating! Change your approach. Don't accept interactions that are less than favorable.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Make a gracious gesture at work, and team spirit gets everyone through a rather chaotic morning. If someone could bottle and sell your ability to organize life, the world would be a much more productive place!

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). A little politeness goes a long way toward giving you a reputation as someone solid and kind. The truly over-the-top generosity comes into play when you decide not to notice whether anybody retracts the favor. That's real class.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). You have many tasks to do, and you have the time and resources to do them equally well, either. Inevitably, something will be skipped. So prioritize carefully, and then, let it go. Tonight, you're distracted by dreams of love.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). Relationships require you to be the leader, something you're comfortable with but not always prefer. Marrying, being the leader requires you to make decisions exactly when awaiting a decision would be much easier.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). Your passion will lead you to do what less passionate people wouldn't dream of — take risks! Approach someone who can help your odds. If you're going to take a risk, why not take one in which the odds are in your favor?

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Your nutrition is out of whack — likely not enough variety, water-rich foods or greens. Stop by the store to remedy this instead of going for yet another quick-stop meal. Note: Your social life requires variety just like your diet.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). You want to improve yourself, become smarter through reading, and create meaningful experiences with loved ones. You're the only one who can give these tasks more urgency! Make a stronger effort to be proactive.

Creators Syndicate

Joyce Jillson



Calvin and Hobbes



Jump Start



Zits



Cathy



Hi and Lois



Beetle Bailey



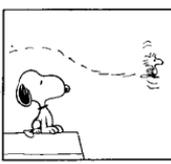
Red Rover



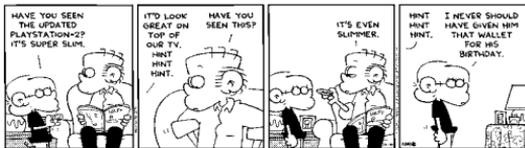
Better or Worse



Peanuts



Fox trot



B.C.



Baby Bites



Spider Man



Blondie



Dilbert



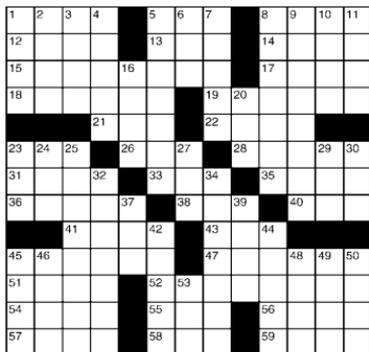
Hagar



Garfield



Eugene Sheffer Crossword



Across

- 1 Tra trailer
- 5 West of Hollywood
- 8 Felix Unger-esque
- 12 Isolators' writings
- 13 Immigrants' study course (Abbr.)
- 14 Montreal player
- 15 Indian metropolis
- 17 "Dead Poets Society" director
- 18 Reddish blue
- 19 Fish-eating hawk
- 21 Scoundrel
- 22 Bender
- 23 eBay offer
- 26 Accomplished
- 28 Concise
- 31 Valhalla VIP
- 33 Prompt
- 35 Heavy reading
- 36 Obstruse ones
- 38 Freddy's street
- 40 Gist
- 41 Distant
- 43 Derek and Diddle
- 45 Diamond pattern
- 47 Canada's capital
- 51 Poi base
- 52 Connecticut city
- 54 Finished
- 55 One more than 27
- 56 Down
- 57 Civil wrong
- 58 Cheat at hide-and-seek
- 59 Young fellow

Down

- 1 Ms. Anderson
- 2 Mideastern gulf
- 3 Lascivious
- 4 Echo sounder acronym
- 5 Tenuous
- 6 Blond shade
- 7 "Silas Marner" author
- 8 Jazz festival town
- 9 Force
- 10 "... baked in —"
- 11 Conservative
- 16 "Zounds!"
- 20 Bowl
- 23 Evening-gown accessory
- 24 Eggs' counterparts
- 25 Be of two minds
- 27 Two (Ital.)
- 29 Ostrich's kin
- 30 Calendar abbr.
- 32 Gotham
- 33 Nudged, in a way
- 37 Bando of baseball
- 39 Sweater destroyer
- 42 Strainsand title role
- 44 Put into words
- 45 On
- 46 Wild dance party
- 48 Acknowledge
- 49 "... off to see the ..."
- 50 Picnic hamperers
- 53 Mound stat

Answer to Previous Puzzle



10-20

CRYPTOQUIP

CGAHGR GWMEGYWY HT
 HBVON EC SKWAG VVRS
 KASR HTY YOYVVY AS

"MKHTSR EC H BACWSANW."
 Yesterday's Cryptoquip: IF A KANGAROO IS FINDING IT HARD TO JUMP, SHOULD HE JUST TAKE SOME LEAPING PILLS?
 Today's Cryptoquip Clue: S equals T

Young girl should follow dream

Dear Abby: Last March you printed a letter I wrote. In it, I told you I had expressed my desire to become the first female U.S. president, but my teacher and fellow students laughed at me.

Since writing to you, I have received a flood of support from friends. Dear Abby readers and you, yourself. But wait, there is more! I received a letter from Sen. John Kerry, and just recently, one from the White House signed by President Bush.

The fact that I received a response to my letter from that high up on the ladder of life has inspired me. I feel that I can now follow my dreams and help other young women my age to believe that they, too, can do whatever they want if they just try hard enough.

I have included a copy of what President Bush had to say, in case you want to print it, Abby. And thank you for your help.

—Marta in Maryland

Dear Marta: Thank you for the update, and for granting me permission to print the letter you received from President Bush. (I printed Sen. Kerry's letter last May.) That he would take time from his campaign schedule to offer you a young people like yourself, who, in the years to come, will determine the future of our country. Read on:

Dear Abby



"Dear Marta: I recently learned about your desire to be president of the United States.

"America is a great country, where people can dream big and achieve their full potential through hard work and determination. I encourage you to continue setting high goals, studying hard and helping others."

"The lessons you learn now will help you develop the character and values you need to succeed in life and become a responsible leader."

"Your idealism, hope and ener-

gy reflect the spirit of America and can help to build a better future for all our citizens."

"Mrs. Bush and I send our best wishes. May God bless you, and may God continue to bless America."

—Sincerely, George W. Bush

Dear Abby: I cannot stand it when people drop in unannounced. My mother is the biggest offender. If our door isn't locked, she walks right in without knocking. My husband and I work hard all week and look forward to peace and quiet on weekends. How can I tell her to call us before coming over?

—Sick of it in Eau Claire, Wis.
Dear Sick of it: I don't blame you for being angry, but your mother isn't to blame for this situation — you are. Your mother may have no idea that you're so angry. Say something to her before you explode.

Letters for this column — with your name and phone number — should be addressed to Dear Abby, P.O. Box 9940, Los Angeles, CA 90009. Readers can write to Abby on the Internet at <http://www.ueexpress.com/dearabby>. Universal Press Syndicate

JUMBLE

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

SNIAE

LEVAT

FUSULE

MINKOO

Answers:

Yesterday's Jumbles: LATHE UNCLE SPLICE VERMOR
Answer: When his parrot greeted them with full language, they were — SPEECHLESS

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME by Henri Arnold and Mike Argrinon



Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Answers tomorrow

Teen girl writes to prison inmates

Dear Annie: My 16-year-old granddaughter, "Lena," lives with me. Legally, I am her foster mother. The state is her guardian.

Lena is writing to, and receiving mail from, two young men who are in prison. They are both over 18 and incarcerated for four to eight years. I don't know what crimes they committed to get these sentences.

Lena met them when they were in high school (before they were arrested).

I have blocked their phone calls, but how do I block their mail? I told Lena's social worker about the correspondence, but he just shrugs his shoulders. I sense real danger in these relationships. What can I do?

Dear Worried: It helps that these young men are behind bars for the foreseeable future. However, Lena will be at least 18 by the time they are out, and this could spell major trouble at a point when you won't be able to do

Annie's Mailbox



much about it. Please talk to Lena without becoming alarmed or angry. Tell her that prison tends to harden inmates, and these men are no longer the boys she remembers. Yes, they deserve a chance to prove themselves, but there's no way to know in advance how that is going to turn out, and Lena needs to understand the dangers. If she sees a better future for herself, she will be less susceptible to the charms of these young men.

Dear Annie: I would like to respond to "Mom's Overprotective Daughter." It seems a neighbor, "Betty," is pressuring Mom to sell her home. One of your suggestions was to have the house put in the daughter's name. Deeding the house over to the kids may not be advisable for estate and gift tax reasons.

As a financial adviser, I have seen many attempts to coerce

elderly people into doing things against their better judgment. Assuming all parties are agreeable, Mom should have a lawyer draw up a power of attorney appointing one or all of her children to act on her behalf in any and all financial matters. Or Mom can have a limited power of attorney drafted, addressing only the issue of her home. Once she has executed this document, she can say to Betty, "You'll have to speak with my daughter. She has full power and authority to handle this for me."

This solution would allow Mom to retain title to her house and let someone else deal with Betty. Perhaps the kids could pay the attorney's fee — a small price for peace of mind. Mom is fortunate to have such a caring daughter.

—Charleston, W.Va.
Dear Charleston: We appreciate your expert advice — which was much better than ours.

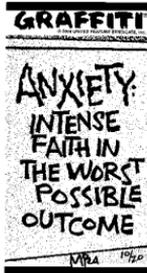
Annie's Mailbox is written by Kathy Mitchell and Marcy Sugar, longtime editors of the Ann Landers column. Please e-mail your questions to anniesmailbox@comcast.net, or write to: Annie's Mailbox, c/o Creators Syndicate, 5777 W. Century Blvd., Suite 700, Los Angeles, CA 90045. Creators Syndicate

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10-20
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"Mother Nature is showing all the leaf-blowers how to do it."



Dennis the Menace



"I LIKE TALKING TO MYSELF. JOEY, CAUSE I ALWAYS GET THE ANSWERS I LIKE."

The Far Side
© Gary Larson



"And as the not slooooooosly lifted him from the water, the voice kept whispering, 'I want your legs... I want your legs... I want your legs...'"

Non Sequiter



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Forster, Okinawa - Household
appliances for sale. Brand new
toaster, oven, \$300.00. A white
dishwasher, \$100.00. Call
963-639-1000

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Forster, Okinawa - Household
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Miscellaneous 040

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1994 Toyota Camry. 4 door, 1.8 liter, 160,000 miles. Excellent condition. Call 963-639-1000

Autos for Sale 146

Sagamihara, Okinawa Japan -
1994 Toyota Camry. 4 door, 1.8 liter, 160,000 miles. Excellent condition. Call 963-639-1000

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SHOP OFFER!
Do your Holiday Shopping at "The Source"

Autos for Sale 146

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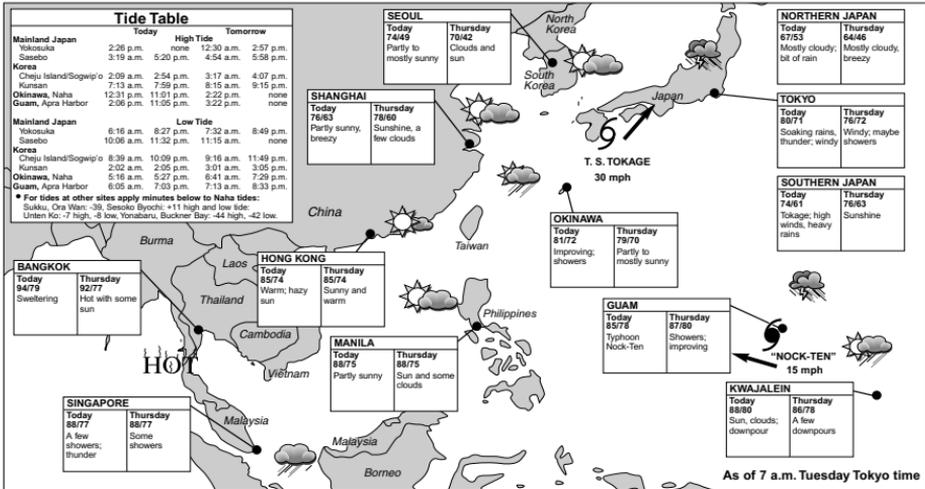
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The Pacific Forecast

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Extended Forecasts

TOKYO	KADENA	SEOUL	MANILA	HAGATNA
Friday: Partly sunny, high 74, low 62.	Friday: Mostly sunny, high 79, low 70.	Friday: Sunny, high 58, low 36.	Friday: Partly sunny, high 86, low 75.	Friday: Showers, high 89, low 78.
Saturday: Partly sunny, high 63, low 52.	Saturday: Partly sunny, high 79, low 52.	Saturday: Mostly sunny, high 60, low 41.	Saturday: Periods of clouds and sunshine, high 86, low 75.	Saturday: Showers, high 89, low 75.

Monday's USA Temperatures

CITY	HIGH/LOW	CITY	HIGH/LOW
Albuquerque	68/44	Los Angeles	68/60
Amarillo	79/48	Little Rock	83/64
Anchorage	38/31	Louisville	68/58
Ashville	72/55	Miami	85/76
Baltimore	62/50	Milwaukee	51/42
Birmingham	82/67	Nashville	76/64
Bismarck	40/31	New York	64/50
Boise	57/41	Omaha	60/42
Boston	60/44	Orlando	87/69
Brownsville	94/78	Philadelphia	65/52
Buffalo	52/42	Phoenix	81/63
Cleveland	52/45	Salt Lake City	59/41
Charleston, SC	83/64	Portland, OR	56/49
Charlotte	73/60	Portland, ME	57/37
Chicago	52/45	Salt Lake City	59/41
Columbus, OH	56/48	St. Louis	70/54
Duluth	46/33	San Antonio	91/72
El Paso	79/56	San Diego	71/63
Hartford	60/41	San Juan	92/76
Helena	48/26	Tampa	87/72
Indianapolis	58/50	Tulsa	84/52
Jacksonville	86/66	Washington	65/55
Kansas City	62/47	Wichita	73/48

Wednesday, October 20



U.S. Extended Forecast

The most significant weather across the country will continue to be found across the Rockies to the West Coast by Wednesday, as a potential storm system crosses the mountains and redevelops in the central Plains. Cloudy, damp and cool conditions will continue across much of the Pacific Northwest and California. Eventually the clouds will begin to give way in California, especially by Thursday. The first heavy snowfall of the season for the Rockies will bring a couple of feet of snow. The Southeast will begin to dry out, but cloudy and rather cool conditions will persist into Thursday. Showers and thunderstorms will impact the northern Plains by Friday. The Ohio Valley will be warm.

Wednesday's Pacific Temperatures

CITY	HIGH/LOW	CITY	HIGH/LOW
Bangkok	94/79	Iskani	72/60
Beijing	65/43	Kadema AB	81/72
Camp Casey	73/48	Kusanan AB	74/55
Christchurch	57/40	Kwajalein	88/80
Diego Garcia	81/73	Manila	89/75
Hagatna	88/78	Masawa AB	64/54
Hanoi	85/74	Osan	74/50
Hong Kong	85/74	Perth	70/50
Honolulu	87/73	Pusan	72/58

Wednesday's World Temperatures

CITY	HIGH/LOW	CITY	HIGH/LOW	CITY	HIGH/LOW
Accapulco	91/77	Busaep	62/47	Kabul	81/52
Athens	84/70	Buenos Aires	73/55	Kiev	48/38
Auckland	57/50	Cairo	95/67	Kuwait	98/71
Baghdad	100/66	Cancun	85/47	London	64/43
Barbados	90/74	Cape Town	64/45	Madrid	70/51
Barcelona	72/62	Geneva	64/45	Mexico City	77/52
Berlin	54/46	Istanbul	74/51	Montreal	49/37
Bermuda	78/74	Jerusalem	84/63	Mogadishu	83/71
Brussels	69/51	Johannesburg	79/57	Moscow	44/33



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SCOREBOARD

AFN TV & Radio

Wednesday

AFN-Sports, 2 a.m.-NFL Tampa Bay at St. Louis (10/17).

AFN-Sports, 4 p.m.-NFL Tampa Bay/Kanto, Korea, 9 a.m.-Baseball: At Championship Series, Houston at N.Y. Yankees, Game 7 (if necessary).

AFN-Sports, 4 p.m.-College football: UCLA at California (10/17).

AFN-Sports, 9 p.m.-Baseball: At Championship Series, Boston vs. N.Y. Yankees, Game 6 (if necessary) (10/17).

Thursday

AFN-Sports, AFN Radio Japan/Kanto, 5 a.m.-Baseball: At Championship Series, Houston at St. Louis, Game 6 (if necessary).

AFN-Sports, AFN Radio Japantele, 9 a.m.-Baseball: At Championship Series, Boston vs. N.Y. Yankees, Game 7 (if necessary).

AFN-Sports, 4 p.m.-Baseball: At Championship Series, Houston at St. Louis, Game 6 (if necessary).

AFN-Sports, 9 p.m.-Baseball: At Championship Series, Houston at St. Louis, Game 7 (if necessary).

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No. 15 Louisville vs. South Florida

Saturday, Oct. 23

No. 1 Southern Cal. vs. Washington

No. 2 Oklahoma vs. Kansas

No. 3 Auburn vs. Kentucky

No. 4 Miami at North Carolina State

No. 5 California at Wake Forest

No. 6 Wisconsin vs. Northwestern

No. 7 Michigan at Arizona

No. 8 Texas at Texas Tech

No. 9 Utah vs. UNLV

No. 10 Georgia at Arkansas

No. 11 Tennessee vs. Alabama

No. 12 Purdue vs. No. 11 Michigan

No. 13 Florida State vs. Virginia Tech

No. 17 Texas A&M vs. Colorado

No. 18 Tennessee vs. Oklahoma

No. 19 Boise State vs. Fresno State

No. 20 Wake Forest vs. Wake Forest

No. 21 Arizona State vs. UCLA

No. 22 Virginia Tech vs. Virginia Tech

No. 24 Notre Dame vs. Boston College

No. 25 Iowa at Penn State

Lead changes: 13 among 8 drivers.

Top leaders: 1-56 Castrovese, 57-59 Horn

and 60-62 Shiro, 63-64 Franchitti, 65-67

Wheldon, 66-91 Castrovese, 92 Fernandez,

93-94 Horn, 95-110 Fernandez, 111-116

Hornish, 117-161 Meira, 162-166 Kanaan, 167-179

Wheldon, 180-200 Hornish.

NEXTEL Cup leaders

Through Oct. 17

Points

1. Kurt Busch, 589; 2. Dale Earnhardt Jr.,

582; 3. Jeff Gordon, 574; 4. Elliott Sarder,

569; 5. Ryan Newman, 565; 6. Elliott Sadler,

564; 7. Matt Kenseth, 553; 8. Jimmie

Johnson, 549; 9. Ryan Newman, 547; 10. Steve

Yaffey, 550; 11. Jamie McMurray,

547; 12. Matt Kenseth, 546; 13. Matt Kenseth,

542; 14. Bobby Labonte, 532; 15. Casey

Mears, 528; 16. Michael Waltrip, 527; 17.

Jeff Burton, 523; 18. Rusty Wallace, 520; 19.

Joe Nemechek, 520; 20. Terry Slaton, 520.

Tagliabue: Build stadium, and Super Bowl will come

BY BOBBY ROSS JR.

The Associated Press

ARLINGTON, Texas — A proposed 75,000-seat, retractable-roof stadium for the Dallas Cowboys would give Arlington one of the finest multipurpose stadiums in the world, NFL commissioner Paul Tagliabue told city business leaders Monday.

The stadium could be adapted for events drawing between 20,000 and 100,000 people, Tagliabue said during a breakfast speech to the Arlington Chamber of Commerce.

"You can compete for major college events, like the (basketball) Final Four," he added. "That and, of course, you can expect to host the Super Bowl."

Monday capped a three-day visit by Tagliabue in which he urged Arlington voters to approve millions of dollars in tax increases to fund half of the \$650 million stadium.

On Nov. 2, Arlington voters will decide on a sales tax increase to pay for the stadium. Arlington, halfway between Dallas and Fort Worth, is the state's seventh-largest city with more than 355,000 residents.

If approved, the funding would come from a half-cent sales tax increase, a 2 percent increase in hotel-occupancy taxes and a 5 percent increase in car-rental taxes.

Tagliabue reiterated comments he made Sunday during the Cowboys-Fittsburgh Steelers game that the Arlington facility would be a great place for the league's championship game.

If stadium plans proceed as scheduled, Tagliabue said the chamber that 2011 would be the first year that Arlington would be eligible to host the Super Bowl.

"You can compete for major college events, like the Final Four. That and, of course, you can expect to host the Super Bowl."

Paul Tagliabue
NFL commissioner



Oakland Raiders quarterback Rich Gannon speaks at his injury during a press conference on Monday in Oakland, Calif. Gannon will miss the rest of the season because of a broken vertebra in his neck.

Gannon will skip remaining games

BY JANIE MCCAULEY

The Associated Press

ALAMEDA, Calif. — Rich Gannon will not return to the field for the Oakland Raiders this season because of a broken vertebra in his neck.

The quarterback, who turns 39 in December, saw four of the country's top neck and spine specialists over the past couple of weeks and was told he shouldn't try to play again this year.

Gannon didn't rule out a return next season and wasn't ready to say he's going to retire.

"After visiting with these professionals and these experts, it's been brought to my attention that it's the general consensus that a return to action this season is unrealistic," Gannon said Monday, speaking publicly for the first time since getting hurt in a helmet-to-helmet hit Sept. 26. "As far as my future, I'm just not really in a position to speculate beyond the 2004 season."

Gannon will still make his \$4.5 million base salary this season because he's a vested veteran. He re-structured his \$7 million contract last month by converting \$2.5 million into unlikely-to-be-earned incentives for salary-cap purposes.

Gannon was knocked out of the game in the first quarter of the

Raiders' 30-20 victory over Tampa Bay last month after being hit by linebacker Derrick Brooks. The Raiders originally said Gannon would be out at least eight weeks. Kerry Collins is playing in his place.

This was supposed to be Gannon's comeback season.

The 2002 NFL MVP was hurt in a 17-10 loss to Kansas City last Oct. 20, and had shoulder surgery in November, finishing the season on injured reserve. This off-season was the most productive in his 17-year career as he worked his way back.

The Raiders had not yet placed Gannon on injured reserve.

"It's extremely disappointing," said Gannon, wearing a hard neck brace he'll need for about six weeks. "I don't think a lot of people realize just what went into it, and the night of the injury I think people saw the excruciating pain on my face. ... I put a lot of effort and energy into coming back."

Gannon said he knew the injury was significant right away, but never felt numbness in his extremities.

Gannon will discuss his future in football with his wife, Shelley, and the couple's two daughters.

"I have no regrets if that Sunday night game was my last," Gannon said.



NFL commissioner Paul Tagliabue tells the Arlington, Texas Chamber of Commerce on Monday of his support for building a new stadium for the Dallas Cowboys in the city. Voters will decide the issue on Nov. 2.

The comment drew cheers from the crowd of about 1,000, which included former star players such as Troy Aikman and Roger Staubach.

Opponents say the deal would not foster economic growth or bring the benefits laid out by the city and team.

Outside the chamber meeting, about a dozen opponents carried signs such as "Sack the Stadium Tax" and "No Jones Tax," referring to Cowboys owner Jerry Jones. Jones did not attend Monday's meeting.

"They've pulled out all the stops," said protester Terry Witt, 64, a retired accounting professor. "They've sent at least 12 mailers to me, slick advertisements, very expensive pieces filled with half-truths."

The Cowboys want to replace Texas Stadium in Irving, which has been their home since 1971.

Jones has said he would pay \$325 million toward the cost of the stadium, which Tagliabue said may be the "largest commitment that any owner has made for a stadium." Arlington would pay no more than \$325 million for the project.

The Cowboys would play home games for 30 years in Arlington; pay \$2 million in rent annually at the new stadium, with two 10-year lease extensions allowed; and give the city 5 percent of any naming-rights deal.

Arlington officials said revenue from user fees, including a 10 percent ticket tax and a \$3 parking tax, would go to the team.

Sunday's NFL stars:



AP photos

Quarterbacks

■ Daunte Culpepper, Minnesota, completed 26 of 37 for 425 yards and five touchdowns in a 38-31 victory over New Orleans.

■ Jeff Garcia, Cleveland, was 16-for-23 with 310 yards and four touchdowns in a 34-17 victory over Cincinnati.

■ Trent Green, Chiefs, threw for 298 yards and two touchdowns, including a 14-yard toss to Cortez Hancock, with 48 seconds to play, helping Jacksonville past Kansas City 22-16.

■ Ben Roethlisberger, Steelers, completed 21 of 25 passes, threw two touchdowns and connected on 11 straight throws on Pittsburgh's last drive, including a 24-20 comeback win at Dallas.

■ Trent Green, Chiefs, was 23-for-33 for 315 yards and two touchdowns, but Kansas City lost 22-16 at Jacksonville.

Running Backs

■ Reuben Droughns, Broncos, rushed for 176 yards and a touchdown in a 31-13 win against the Oakland Raiders. Droughns ran for 193 yards last week against Carolina.

■ Curtis Martin, Jets, ran for 111 yards and two touchdowns in a 22-14 victory over San Francisco. His fourth 100-yard this year.

■ Clinton Portis, Redskins, carried 36 times for 171 yards in Washington's 13-10 victory in Chicago.

■ Willis McGahee, Bills, rushed for 111 yards in his first NFL start, helping Buffalo to a 20-13 win over Miami.

■ Corey Dillon, Patriots, ran for 105 yards and two touchdowns in New England's 20th straight victory, 40-20 over Seattle.

Receivers

■ Koren Robinson, Seahawks, caught nine passes for 150 yards but it wasn't enough for Seattle, which lost 30-20 at New England.

■ Lee Suggs, Browns, caught five passes for 100 yards — including a 59-yard grab — to become the first Cleveland running back to reach the mark since Eric Metcalfe (101) in 1993. Suggs also ran for 19 yards in the 34-17 win over Cincinnati.

■ Donald Driver, Packers, had nine receptions for 110 yards and two touchdowns in Green Bay's 38-10 victory at Detroit.

■ Johnnie Morton, Chiefs, had 111 yards on seven receptions, but Kansas City lost 22-16 at Jacksonville.

■ Johnnie Morton, Chiefs, had 111 yards on seven receptions, but Kansas City lost 22-16 at Jacksonville.

■ Johnnie Morton, Chiefs, had 111 yards on seven receptions, but Kansas City lost 22-16 at Jacksonville.

Is 0-16 a possibility for Miami?

BY STEVEN WINE

The Associated Press

DAVE, Fla. — The Miami Dolphins couldn't beat a winless team, raising the question of whether they'll win a game all year.

The franchise free fall has transformed a perennial title contender into a team with the NFL's worst record — and a shot at the league's first 0-16 season. Miami fell to 0-6 Sunday, losing 20-13 at Buffalo in a showdown between the league's only winless teams.

Might the lone franchise to achieve a perfect season go 0-for-2004? Tight end Randy McMichael laughed at the notion.

"It seems very unimaginable," McMichael said Monday. "But stranger things have happened. If you had told me we would be 0-6 right now, I wouldn't have believed that."

The Dolphins have the worst record in their 39-year history, and a difficult schedule remains.

"The offense is weak, the defense looks weary from trying to carry the team, and the coach is grasping for sources of motivation with Miami already out of the playoff picture."

Speculation regarding coach Dave Wannstedt's future has shifted from whether he'll be fired to when — and who will depart with him.

A housecleaning that would include general manager Rick Spielman and much of the coaching staff becomes more likely with each defeat.

Owner Wayne Huizenga has declined to comment, but the Dolphins' self-destructive performances speak volumes. They've had four interceptions returned



The Buffalo Bills' Sammy Knight (24) pushes Miami Dolphins receiver Marty Booker (86) out of bounds during the second half on Sunday.

for touchdowns, including a screen pass Sunday thrown by Jay Fiedler. Those kind of mistakes are tough to overcome, especially for a team that has scored just four touchdowns and an NFL-low 55 points.

Wannstedt, who has already changed quarterbacks twice, said Fiedler will remain the starter Sunday against St. Louis. But A.J. Feeley is on standby.

"Our quarterbacks need to play a lot better," Wannstedt said. "When there are guys open we need to hit them, and we can't turn the ball over."

Other problems surfaced Sunday, when Miami took a lead for only the second time this season but failed to hold it. The defense, stout for much of the season, gave up 14 first downs and 242 yards in the second half.

"The most frustrating part of a loss is that there are different circumstances involved on a week-to-week basis," Wannstedt said. "You feel like you make a little bit of headway in one area and then you struggle in another. That's the challenging part."

The Dolphins will have few bet-

ter opportunities to win, because only three of their final 10 games are against teams with losing records. They play at home Nov. 7 against Arizona (1-4) and Dec. 5 against Buffalo (1-4), and at San Francisco (1-5) on Nov. 28.

The last time to flirt with 0-16 was the 2001 Detroit Lions, who lost their first 12 games. The last winless team was Tampa Bay, which went 0-14 in its first season in 1976.

NFL parity supposedly precludes winless seasons — and long winning streaks, too. But New England has won a league-record 20 games in a row, so perhaps Miami is destined to set a record with 16 defeats.

"No. Never No," said defensive end David Bowers, who instead predicted the Dolphins will win their final 10 games.

"I honestly believe that. Look at New England — those guys aren't blowing people out. They're getting the turnovers, they're playing penalties and they're reacting together. If they can win that many games, why can't we win 10?"

The Dolphins will have to win one first.

Patriots staying strong in red zone

BY HOWARD ULMAN

The Associated Press

FOXBORO, Mass. — New England's defenders let Seattle march down the field. Just 12 seconds remained and the Seahawks had a first down at the Patriots' 2-yard line.

In the defensive huddle, the message was clear: "No score. We don't care what they do, we're not going to let them in." Linebacker Tedy Bruschi said.

And they didn't. Matt Hasselbeck threw two incompletions, a penalty moved the ball to the 1, and the Patriots stopped Mack Strong for no gain on the final play, then ran off the field with a 30-20 victory on Sunday, their NFL-record 20th consecutive victory.

It didn't matter to the Patriots that Seattle couldn't have won the game even with a touchdown on the last drive. The end zone is the Patriots' territory and they'll defend it no matter what the situation.

On their five trips inside the New England 20, the Seahawks managed just three field goals and a touchdown.

"That last red zone stand on the goal line was huge for us," strong safety Rodney Harrison said. "It just showed people that, regardless of the score, we're going to continue to play to the end."

The Patriots' defense started brilliantly with interceptions on Seattle's first two drives, then let to a 10-0 lead. It was 17-0 early in the second quarter and 20-6 at halftime.

But with 11:05 left in the game, New England couldn't stop Seattle after the Seahawks' Michael Boulware intercepted Tom Brady's pass. That drive ended in

Shaun Alexander's 9-yard touchdown run and a two-point conversion that made it 20-17.

It was 23-17 when Seattle started at its 26-yard line and moved all the way to a first down at New England's 13. Then a 2-yard loss on a complete pass and two penalties forced the Seahawks to settle for a field goal.

The Patriots held Seattle to field goals on three series that went inside the 20 and another that reached the 22. So the Seahawks scored just 12 points on the kicks rather than 28 had each drive ended in a touchdown and extra point.

"That's the difference of 16 points," Harrison said. "That definitely changed the outcome of the game."

New England (5-0) has allowed just 16.1 points per game this season and played well defending its goal line.

"We weren't very good last year in the red zone so that was a point of emphasis in the offseason," Harrison said. "If you can't stop them from scoring, at least hold them to three points."

The Patriots have allowed opponents to convert only 38 percent of their third-down plays into first downs.

Bruschi said it's a matter of pride for the Patriots to keep the end zone, even as with the Seahawks, it doesn't affect the outcome.

"I guess they thought we were just going to let them have six points, so they would get out of there," Bruschi said. "But, no. We're not going to do that."

"We don't care when it is, what the situation is. Getting in our end zone is going to be tough to do, and we want to send a message to everyone that it's going to be tough."

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DODDS turns down wrestling offer

BY DAVE ORNAUER

Stars and Stripes

An offer by St. Mary's International School of Tokyo to host the 2005 Far East high school wrestling tournament to enable international school wrestlers to compete has been turned down by Department of Defense Dependents Schools-Pacific.

In an e-mail dated Sunday and sent to St. Mary's athletics director David Ducharme, DODDS-Pacific's Far East Activities Council chair Don Hobbs cited the distance between the host venue and the base where DODDS wrestlers would be billeted as the major reason.

"Having participants billeted a considerable distance from the tournament site is asking too much of the wrestlers," Hobbs said in the e-mail.

Citing concerns about billeting and the availability of athletics facilities, DODDS-Pacific decided

on Sept. 22 to limit the Far East wrestling, cross country and tennis tournaments to DODDS schools only.

The decision left open the possibility that DODDS teams could participate in Far East tournaments hosted by international schools.

Ducharme's offer was made Sept. 29 in an e-mail to Hobbs. It included plans for St. Mary's to host the tournament at a Japanese venue and to home-stay international schools participants, and for DODDS-Pacific wrestlers to stay on a military base and be bused to and/or from the venue.

"Participants, I have been informed, would be on buses up to four hours daily traveling to and from billeting on Yokota [Air Base] and/or other locations," Hobbs's e-mail stated.

Hobbs could not be reached for comment.

The DODDS-Pacific Far East

wrestling tournament is scheduled for Feb. 17-19 at Yokota Air Base, Japan. It originally was scheduled for Feb. 21-23 but moved to the previous week so Yokota could host "better accommodation" wrestlers, DODDS officials said earlier this month.

Ducharme said he would move forward with the "better accommodation" wrestling tournament for international schools, either at Faith Academy in the Philippines, which has expressed interest in hosting one, or at St. Mary's, "should Faith hosting it fall through."

Plans are proceeding for an alternative Asia Pacific Invitational cross country meet on Guam Nov. 8-10, the same dates as the 2004 DODDS Far East meet at Misawa Air Base, Japan. An alternative tennis tournament for international schools in November somewhere in Tokyo has "fallen through," Ducharme said.

E-mail Dave Ornauer at: ornaup@stripes.osd.mil

Culpepper sets record with 5 more TD passes

By MARY FOSTER
The Associated Press

NEW ORLEANS — Daunte Culpepper was just fine without Randy Moss.

Minnesota's quarterback threw five touchdown passes for the third time this season — an NFL record — to lead the Vikings past the New Orleans Saints 38-31 Sunday night.

"It's all about stepping up," Culpepper said. "Accepting the challenge and doing whatever it takes."

Moss, who leads the NFL in TD catches, injured his hamstring in the second quarter after making two receptions for 89 yards and a touchdown. It was the 10th consecutive game with a touchdown catch for Moss, who changed into a track suit and watched the second half from the sideline.

"It was a little lonely without my man," Culpepper said. "But he's a soldier. He'll be back."

Despite stiff pressure from the Saints, Culpepper completed 26 of 37 passes for 425 yards and all these scores. It was a career high in passing yards for Culpepper, beating his previous record of 396 yards against Oakland on Nov. 16, 2003.

"In all my time in the NFL, I've never seen a quarterback like this boy," said Saints cornerback Ashley Ambrose, a 13-year veteran.

The Vikings (4-1) had 605 yards of offense and converted eight of 11 third downs.

Culpepper, who also threw two interceptions and was sacked twice, has completed just over 72 percent of his passes this season, throwing for 1,766 yards and 18 TDs.

Rookie running back Mewelde Moore had another big game for Minnesota, rushing for 109 yards and catching seven passes for 78 yards.

"I had to stay calm and make sure I was focused," Moore said. "I had fun out there."

Nate Burleson had six receptions for 134 yards for Minnesota.

New Orleans' Aaron Brooks completed 22 of 38 passes for 249 yards and a touchdown. He was intercepted once. Deuce McAllister ran for 78 yards and two touchdowns on 18 carries.

A pass-interference call against Ambrose set up the Vikings' first touchdown, giving them a first down on the 1. On the next play, Culpepper hit Jermaine Wiggins for the touchdown.

Minnesota got its first interception of the season, preventing New Orleans (2-4) from scoring and setting up the Vikings' second score. Culpepper hit Moss in the end zone on a 43-yard play, making it 14-0 less than a minute into the second quarter.

The Saints recovered a fumbled snap and scored on a 2-yard run by McAllister that made it 14-7.

Marcus Robinson caught a 16-yard touchdown pass to give the Vikings a 21-7 lead. Then the Saints put together their best drive of the half, going 73 yards in four plays, with Brooks connecting with Joe Horn for a 7-yard touchdown.

The Vikings opened the second half with Culpepper throwing a 9-yard touchdown pass to Wiggins for a 28-14 lead.

"He's a great QB," Saints coach Jim Haslett said. "We just didn't make any plays, and he made some fantastic plays."

On fourth-and-3 on their 28, the Saints lined up in punt formation, then snapped the ball to blocking back Fred McAfee, who scampered 53 yards to the Minnesota 19. McAllister finished it off with a 1-yard run, making it 28-21.

A 39-yard field goal by Morten Andersen stretched the Vikings' lead to 10 at 31-21 at the end of the third quarter. John Carney kicked a 45-yarder to pull New Orleans to 31-24 early in the fourth period.

Culpepper, who led the NFL with a 126.0 passer rating going into the game, threw his last touchdown pass to Robinson, making it 38-24.

Brooks then scrambled 5 yards for a touchdown to pull the Saints to 38-31 with 2:51 left. But Minnesota kept the ball the rest of the way.



Minnesota Vikings quarterback Daunte Culpepper (11) losses a pass in the first half over New Orleans Saints linebacker Sedrick Hodge (52) Sunday night. It was the third time this season Culpepper threw three TD passes in a game, an NFL record.

Raiders pose no challenge for Broncos

By JANIE MCCAULEY
The Associated Press

OAKLAND, Calif. — Jake Plummer hit his targets, Reuben Droughns hit his holes, and Denver's defense hit everybody in sight.

The Denver Broncos walked into the Oakland Coliseum with a swagger rarely seen in their anything-can-happen rivalry with the Raiders, and it was well deserved.

Plummer passed for 190 yards and three touchdowns. Droughns ran for 176 yards and a touchdown, and the Broncos took command of the AFC West with a 31-3 victory Sunday.

"We just pounded them in the third and fourth quarter. The quiet was nice," Plummer said.

Job Tutizer, Dwayne Carswell and Ashley Leike caught first-half touchdowns passing for Plummer, who led the Broncos (5-1) to a 28-point cushion in the third quarter and 444 total yards. Droughns had his second straight 100-yard game, after running for 193 yards in a victory over Carolina.

His 38 carries were a franchise record for a non-overtime game.

"After my performance last week, I didn't want anybody to doubt I could do it again," said Droughns, who scored on a 4-yard run in the third quarter.

"They were definitely frustrated. Any time you pound the ball and break tackles, they're going to get worn out a little bit."

Oakland's Jerry Rice, disgraced with his limited role, didn't



Oakland's Ray Buchanan, left, and Danny Clark try to stop Denver's Reuben Droughns during their game on Sunday in Oakland, Calif.

catch a pass for the third time this season and the second straight week. The 42-year-old Rice, who asked for a trade last week, considered this the most devastating loss of his career.

"This is probably the worst one because I felt like we weren't in the ballgame. We can't let teams jump up on us," said Rice, who heard fans chanting "Jerry! Jerry!" as the clock ticked away in the final minutes. "I just hope nobody is basically going to throw the towel in, and we keep working hard in practice."

Denver's defense was suffocating, holding the Raiders' inept offense to 145 yards. The Raiders (2-4) don't keep track of negative statistics in their media guide, but it was surely one of the most embarrassing performances in franchise history.

"We never get tired of dominant

ing someone." Denver safety John Lynch said. "We were talking about it every down in the huddle in the second half." "Keep them down, keep them down, keep them down."

After Denver's early scores dug a huge hole for the Raiders, the rare sellout crowd boomed whenever Collins' crew took the field. The Raiders hoped returning home would cure their abundance of problems, but coach Norv Turner's first season is quickly turning ugly after three straight losses.

"It really didn't bother me," Collins said. "I understand that's the part of it. When a team's struggling like we are right now, when the offense is struggling, the quarterback usually gets the blame for it. I'm to blame for my fair share of what's gone on in the last couple of weeks. We just didn't give them a whole lot to cheer about today."

Steelers capitalize on Cowboys' error

By KRISTIE RIEKEN
The Associated Press

IRVING, Texas — Bill Parcells warned the Dallas Cowboys about good Ben Roethlisberger could be.

Pittsburgh's rookie quarterback was as good as advertised.

"He's going to be the rookie of the year," Cowboys defensive end Greg Ellis said after Roethlisberger led the Steelers to a 24-20 comeback victory Sunday. "He has the physical and mental talent that you need."

"To be that young and that good, you have to credit him for that."

Roethlisberger rattled the Cowboys for 21-for-25 passing and two touchdowns to become the first rookie quarterback to go 4-0 since Phil Simms did it in 1979 with the New York Giants. The former Miami of Ohio star also became the first Pittsburgh quarterback to win in Dallas since Terry Bradshaw in 1982.

"I can't say enough about him," Steelers coach Bill Cowher said. "I thought this would be a good test for him and it was."

The Cowboys also made another huge mistake that led to another loss.

A fumble by quarterback Vinny Testaverde late in the game set up the Steelers' winning touchdown. After Pittsburgh recovered, Jerome Bettis scored from 2 yards out to cap a short drive.

Parcells had talked all week about Roethlisberger's abilities, even comparing him to a young Dan Marino.

"He's going to be an outstanding quarterback," Parcells said. "He's got great poise. I haven't changed my mind about that."

teammates were impressed, too.

"He can flat-out play," receiver Plaxico Burress said. "I think Parcells was right."

Roethlisberger had a 5-yard touchdown pass to Burress in the first quarter as he rolled out of the pocket to elude the rush and rifled the ball into the end zone.

On his 7-yard TD pass to Jerome Tuman early in the fourth, Roethlisberger withstood the pressure in the pocket waiting for Tuman to get open.

The rookie had nine straight completions on the Steelers' last two scoring drives and 11 in one stretch.

Roethlisberger, who was sacked three times, said his right knee was hurting during the game. But he stayed cool under pressure to make the key plays against a tough pass rush.

"I had nothing to plant or push off of," he said. "I could not throw off my back leg. They were very fast and physical and they came after us."

Testaverde was 23-for-36 for 284 yards and a touchdown but also fumbled twice.

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USC, Miami are 1-2 in first BCS rankings

Oklahoma, No. 2 in both 'human' polls, is No. 5 in computer

BY RALPH D. RUSSO
The Associated Press

Southern California took the top spot Monday in the season's first Bowl Championship Series standings, and surprisingly Miami is ahead of Oklahoma in a close race for the second spot.

Oklahoma is No. 2 behind USC in both The Associated Press Top 25 and coaches poll. Put in place after last season's split national championship, the new BCS formula relies more on the human polls than ever before.

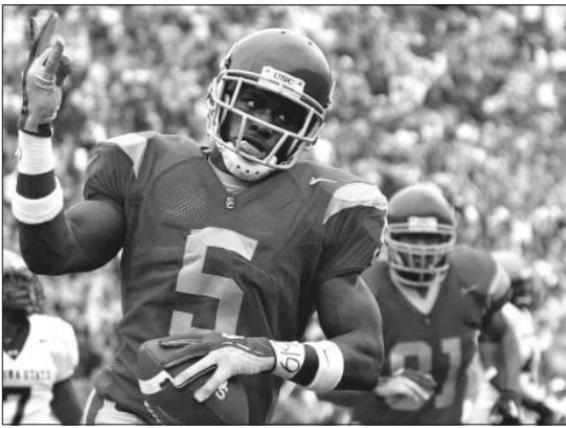
"I think it's obviously very early. It's important that there not be an overreaction to this poll," BCS coordinator and Big 12 commissioner Kevin Weiberg said.

Still, even Weiberg was taken aback by Miami's position ahead of Oklahoma.

"I think I was a little surprised, to tell you the truth," he said.

The AP and coaches polls each count for one-third of a team's total score. The other third is compiled from six computer rankings, and that's where Miami made up the difference over the Sooners. The Hurricanes are ranked fourth in the AP media poll and third in the coaches poll, but are second in the computer rankings.

Oklahoma, which benefited from the old system last season, was fifth in the computer rankings. Each team's highest and lowest computer ranking is tossed out and the remaining four are averaged. Weiberg said that Oklahoma was probably hurt in the computer rankings by having played only one road game.



Reggie Bush scores a touchdown in Southern California's 45-7 rout of Arizona State on Saturday, an outcome that helped the top-ranked Trojans take a solid lead in the first Bowl Championship Series rankings of the season. Miami was second in the BCS ahead of Oklahoma, which is No. 2 in the media and coaches polls.

"Several of them use a home-and-away factor in their formula so I think it has some influence, yes," he said.

Oklahoma has one victory over a ranked team (Texas), while Miami has two (Florida State and Louisville), which also sways computer rankings, Weiberg said.

The Orange Bowl will host the top two teams in the final BCS standings on Jan. 4 for the national title.

USC, No. 1 in each of the major polls all season, has a big lead in the BCS with a score of 5912 out of a possible 1,000. Miami's score is .9187, Oklahoma's .9161.

Auburn is fourth (.9036) and Florida State fifth

(.8072). The Seminoles, with one loss, are ahead of unbeatens Wisconsin (.7255) and Utah (.7251).
The Utes, ranked ninth in the AP poll and 10th in the ESPN/USA Today poll, are in position to become the first team from outside the six major conferences to earn a bid to one of the

four big-ticket BCS games.

The champions from the Atlantic Coast Conference, Big Ten, Big 12, Big East, Pac-10 and Southeastern Conference make up six of the eight teams in the four BCS games — the Orange, Sugar, Rose and Fiesta bowls. The other two spots go to wild-card teams.

Finishing in the top six in the BCS standings also guarantees a team a BCS bowl bid. A top-12 ranking in the final BCS standings is necessary to be eligible for one of the wild-card spots.

Utah plays in the Mountain West Conference and has a 3-0 record this sea-

son against teams from BCS conferences.

Boise State, the other unbeaten team from a mid-major conference, was 14th in the first BCS standings.

The BCS changed its formula for determining which teams play for the national title after last season, when USC finished the regular season ranked No. 1 in both polls, but third in the BCS standings and was left out of the title game.

Oklahoma reached the title game last season because of flaws in the old BCS formula. The Sooners lost the Big 12 title game and dropped to No. 3 in the major polls, but still finished first in the BCS standings. They were beaten in the Sugar Bowl by LSU, which mandated a vote of No. 1 in the coaches poll. USC ended up No. 1 in the media poll.

Under the system in place this season, LSU and USC would have played in the Sugar Bowl last season.

In the past, results from the AP and coaches polls were averaged, then factored in with the other components — a formula that lessened the significance of the polls.

BCS officials scaled down the formula this season, eliminating elements such as bonus points for quality victories and strength of schedule, which was considered redundant because computers and poll voters already take that into account.

Also, for the first time, the BCS formula takes into account the number of votes a team receives in the major polls and not just its ranking.

The goal was to simplify the system and better reflect what are the consensus top two teams in the country.

USC and Oklahoma have been Nos. 1 and 2, respectively, in the polls since the preseason. The Trojans hold a substantial lead in both polls over the Sooners, who in turn are comfortably ahead of No. 3 in both.

BCS Standings List

Oct. 18, 2004

	AP			USA/ESPN			Computer			BCS Avg
	Rk	Pts	Pct	Rk	Pts	Pct	Rk	Pts	Pct	
1. USC	1	1015	991	1	1514	991	1	99	990	9912
2. Miami	4	1448	891	1	1380	905	2	96	960	9187
3. Oklahoma	2	1567	964	2	1470	964	5	83	830	9161
4. Auburn	3	1475	910	4	1350	851	9	91	910	9036
5. Florida St.	5	1304	802	5	1234	809	6	81	810	8072
6. Wisconsin	6	1240	753	7	1088	713	8	70	700	7525
7. Utah	9	1072	660	10	1015	666	4	85	850	7251
8. California	7	1215	748	8	1071	702	12	57	570	6731
9. Tenn.	11	999	615	13	815	534	17	75	750	6331
10. Georgia	10	1040	640	6	1124	737	14	45	450	6590

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Boston averts sweep

Ortiz's home run in 12th wins it; Yankees' ALCS lead is cut to 3-1

BY RONALD BLUM
The Associated Press

BOSTON — Early in the morning, when most fans usually are tucked in bed, David Ortiz set off a frenzy at Fenway Park that gave the Boston Red Sox a shot at pulling off the greatest comeback ever.

The Red Sox were down to their last three outs of the season, close to extinction. Then Boston rallied — against Mariano Rivera, the New York Yankees and decades of disappointment.

Bill Mueller singled home the tying run off Rivera in the ninth inning and Ortiz punched out the right-field bullpen against Paul Quantrill in the 12th, giving Boston an exhilarating and exhausting 6-4 victory. The Red Sox averted a sweep and forced a fifth game in the AL championship series.

"This," Ortiz said, "is a team that never gives up."

Red Sox fans who had been praying, holding hands and hoping against hope a few innings earlier, burst into cheers when Ortiz connected. Long after Sunday turned into Monday, there was still plenty of energy inside old Fenway Park.

Even Ortiz danced home to his teammates waiting at the plate. "We always find a way to make it hard for ourselves," Red Sox starter Derek Lowe said.

This game lasted 5 hours, 2 minutes and ended at 12:21 a.m. EDT. Saturday's 19-8 victory by the Yankees took 4 hours, 20 minutes.

And the teams had about 15 minutes to prepare for Game 5, when Pedro Martinez drew the pitching assignment for the Red Sox against Mike Mussina.

Everybody's going to have trouble sleeping, probably except maybe from exhaustion," Yankees manager Joe Torre said.

Of the 25 previous teams to fall behind 3-0 in a best-of-seven series, 20 were swept, three lost in five games and two lost in six. The Red Sox say it will win again, injured Curt Schilling was ready to start Tuesday in New York.

"We've just got to get to Game 6," Red Sox manager Terry Francona said.

Quantrill, New York's fifth pitcher, relieved Tom Gordon to start the 12th and allowed a lead-off single to Manny Ramirez.



Boston's Dave Roberts slides home with the tying run against New York Yankees in the ninth inning Sunday night. Boston won Game 4 of the AL championship series 6-4 in 12 innings, but still trails 3-1 in the series.

Ortiz then joined New York's Bernie Williams as the only players to hit two game-ending homers in postseason play. Ortiz is the first to do it twice in one year. "Ortiz is just a great hitter, and he beat me," Quantrill said.

Boston was facing a disappointing end to a successful season when Rivera walked Kevin Millar to lead off the ninth.

"You put the walk away, and it would have been totally different," Rivera said. "It wasn't the way I planned it today."

After some pickoff throws, pinch-runner Dave Roberts stole second on the first pitch to Mueller.

"The three pickoff moves got me back into the game. I hadn't played in a while, and it helped me get rid of the jitters," Roberts said.

Mueller then led the ball up

the middle as Roberts easily scored from second and Rivera swung his right arm in disgust. He has blown just four saves in 36 postseason chances, but two have come in the past 12 days.

"It certainly is disappointing," Torre said. "We're so used to Mo going out there and getting people into it, which he did tonight. It's just that the walk and stolen base was the difference in that ninth inning."

With Boston closer Keith Foulke already having pitched 2½ innings, Alan Embree came in and got through the 10th. Curtis Leskanic escaped an 11th-inning jam by retiring Williams on a bases-loaded flyout, then stranded a runner in the 12th by striking out Miguel Cairo.

"Their bullpen did a great job. They made pitches when they had to," New York shortstop

Derek Jeter said. "We definitely let opportunities get by."

The Yankees, who stranded 14 runners, took a 2-0 lead in the third. After Jeter singled with two outs off Lowe, Alex Rodriguez hit a drive to left field over an advertising sign atop the Green Monster, his second homer in two nights.

Sidelined since Oct. 1 with a tired shoulder, Yankees starter Orlando Hernandez baffled Boston with pitches ranging from a 91 mph fastball to a 55 mph curve. Then, in the fifth, the Red Sox went ahead 3-2 on three walks, Cabrera's RBI single and Ortiz's two-run single.

The Yankees came back to score twice in the sixth, with Hideki Matsui starting the rally with a one-out triple. He scored on an infield hit, one of two run-scoring tricklers for New York in the inning.

Ray Boone, baseball family patriarch, dies

The Associated Press

SAN DIEGO — Three-time All-Star Ray Boone, patriarch of a three-generation baseball family, died early Sunday following a long illness. He was 81.

Boone had been hospitalized for six months with complications following surgery, his wife, Pat, said.

"It's a blessing," she said. "He had a great life."

Boone played from 1948-60 with six teams and was followed

into the big leagues by son Bob and grandsons Bret and Aaron.

"We were the first three-generation family," Pat Boone said. "We're not the only one, but we were the first."

Boone was an infielder who had a career .275 batting average, with 151 home runs and 737 RBIs. He played for the Cleveland Indians, Detroit Tigers, Chicago White Sox, Kansas City Athletics, Milwaukee Braves and the Boston Red Sox.

He was an All-Star third baseman for Detroit in 1954 and 1956.

Bob Boone played from 1972-90, and Bret Boone broke into the big leagues with Seattle in 1992. Aaron Boone made his debut in 1997.

The Boone family was the first to send three generations to the All-Star Game.

In 2000, when Bret Boone played for San Diego, he and his father and grandfather threw out the ceremonial first pitch before the Padres' home opener.

Schilling will start Game 6 if it's played

BY JIMMY GOLEN
The Associated Press

BOSTON — Pedro Martinez and Curt Schilling will try to help the Boston Red Sox win it, now that David Ortiz kept them in it.

Ortiz's homer in the 12th inning Sunday night gave the Red Sox a 6-4 victory over the New York Yankees, extending the AL championship series to a fifth game. Martinez drew the Game 5 start Monday night to try to force the series back to New York for a sixth game and give Schilling a chance to make up for a disastrous start in the opener.

"We've just got to get there," manager Terry Francona said after announcing that Schilling was healthy enough to get another start. "But that's our rotation."

The Red Sox traded for Schilling last November with the goal of pairing him with Martinez in a 1-2 pitching punch few teams could match. The co-aces helped Boston win 96 games in the regular season and sweep the Anaheim Angels in the first round of the playoffs.

But Schilling, who hurt his right ankle near the end of the regular season, aggravated the injury during his start in Anaheim.

And when he pitched Game 1 of the ALCS last Tuesday, a tendon sheath kept him from pushing off the mound and affected his velocity. New York won 10-7 on the way to taking a 3-0 series lead.

Schilling was still too sore on Thursday to get back on the mound, so he was scratched from his scheduled Game 5 start. But he was able to warm up normally on Friday and again on Sunday, giving Francona the confidence to restore him to the rotation.

"As far as I'm concerned it's not an issue," Francona said. "We've just got to get to Game 6." Schilling helped lead the Arizona Diamondbacks to victory over New York in the 2001 World Series.

"When you use the words 'mystique' and 'aura,' those are dancers in a nightclub," Schilling said. "Those are not things we concern ourselves with on the ballfield."

After joining the Red Sox, Schilling proclaimed, "I guess I hate the Yankees now." After regular season starts he could be spotted wearing a "Yankee Hater" cap. But when he got the opportunity to back up his words in the playoffs, his ankle let him down.

Schilling allowed six runs in three innings in the series-opening loss, his worst postseason performance since 1994.

"He looked forward to this possible match-up as far back as Thanksgiving last year," Francona said last week. "We've waited out there and was kind of not able to pitch like he wanted to, I'm sure that was very tough for him, and us, too."

SPORTS



USC, Miami atop
first BCS standings,
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Beltran blast evens NLCS

Homers in record fifth straight playoff game

BY BEN WALKER
The Associated Press

HOUSTON — Julian Tavaraz must have forgotten about Carlos Beltran when he said the Cardinals didn't think the Houston Astros were so special.

Beltran struck again Sunday, homering in a record fifth straight postseason game and lifting the Astros over St. Louis 6-5 to even the NL championship series 2-2.

"There's no better feeling," he said. Before Game 1, the excitable Tavaraz upset the Astros with this assessment: "We don't look at the Houston Astros like this is a great team. They are good, but we are better than them. We are the best because we've got 108 wins. We've proved it."

Right now, no one's better than Beltran. He launched a tiebreaking shot off Tavaraz in the seventh inning into to Houston's bullpen, reaching way down to golf a 2-2 slider over the right-field wall.

"Barry Bonds is the best hitter in base-

ball. I don't think he could have hit that pitch," Tavaraz said. "I can't believe he hit it."

Beltran ensured the teams will go back to Busch Stadium to settle who goes to the World Series. Meantime, there's Game 5 Monday night, with Brandon Backe starting for Houston against Woody Williams.

Beltran broke the record set by Jeffrey Leonard and tied by Juan Gonzalez in 1996 for consecutive postseason games with a home run.

He also matched Bonds' 2002 record for homers in a single postseason.

"This is as good as I've ever seen anybody swing the bat, not just Carlos Beltran," Astros manager Phil Garner said. "He's some kind of locked in."

Beltran is getting richer and richer with each swing. The switch-hitting, All-Star center fielder might be the prime free agent on the market once the season ends. At this moment, he's aiming for a ring.

"I'm just being relaxed, patient at the plate," Beltran said.

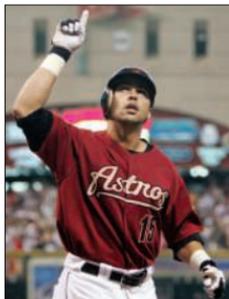
Sluggers again dominated, although not quite the way they did in Game 3 of the ALCS at Fenway Park, where the Yankees obliterated Boston 19-8 Saturday night.

Albert Pujols homered for St. Louis, then came close to a go-ahead two-run homer in the ninth against Brad Lidge. But the ball was caught on the warning track, and the Astros closer struck out Scott Rolen for his second straight save.

Lance Berkman also homered for Houston, giving the teams a combined 19 home runs through only four games.

After Beltran sent the crowd at Minute Maid Park into a frenzy, Tavaraz further angered the Astros when he threw a fast-ball over the head of the next hitter, Jeff Bagwell. They exchanged words, plate umpire Mike Winter warned against further trouble and play resumed without any problems.

SEE NLCS ON PAGE 38



Carlos Beltran reacts after hitting the game-winning home run in the seventh inning against the St. Louis Cardinals.

Ortiz gives Boston hope



David Ortiz, right, is greeted by jubilant Red Sox teammates at the plate after his game-winning home run in the 12th inning Sunday against the Yankees extended the ALCS to a fifth game, scheduled for Monday after this edition went to press. For more on Game 4, see Page 39.



Raiders QB Gannon done for season

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Dolphins have shot at first 0-16 season ever

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Culpepper throws five TDs for third time this year

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